

SACRED HISTORY:

O R,

The Historical Part

O F T H E

H O L Y S C R I P T U R E S

O F T H E

Old Testament :

Gathered out from the other Parts thereof,
and Digested (as near as well could be) into due Me-
thod, with respect to Order of Time and Place.

With some OBSERVATIONS, here and there,
Tending to Illustrate some P A S S A G E S therein.

And a T A B L E to the whole.

B Y

T H O M A S E L L W O O D.

The S E C O N D E D I T I O N.

L O N D O N :

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T H E

P R E F A C E.

WHAT Cicero saith of History in general, namely, that it is, *Temporum Testis, Lux Veritatis, Vita Memoriae, Magistra vitae, & Nuncia Antiquitatis. i. e. The Witness of Times, The Light of Truth, The Life of Memory, The Mistress of Life, and The Messenger of Antiquity*; cannot be so well verified of any particular History, as of That, which being written by Divinely-inspired Penmen, is contained in the Books of the Old and New Testament: The former of which, is the Subject of this Volume.

Of the Matter, nothing need be said; nothing, perhaps can be said, to add to the Excellency, or Credit thereof: But of the Motive or Inducement to the Undertaking, somewhat, peradventure, may be necessary to be hinted.

Two things more especially led me to it.

One, That the Divine Providence, the Wisdom, Power, Goodness and Favour of God, in Ordering, Disposing, Providing for, Preserving, Defending and wonderfully delivering his Servants and People out of the greatest Streights, Difficulties, Hardships, Dangers and Sufferings, being more directly, and in a continued Series and Course of Actions, set before the Reader's Eye: He might be thereby the more stirred up, and engaged to admire and magnifie, to love, reverence and fear the Lord; and be the more careful not to offend him.

The other Motive was, That all, the Youth especially, of either Sex, under whatsoever Religious Denomination they go, might be furnished with such an Entertainment

tainment, to spend (at least) *their* leizure Hours upon, as might yield them at once both Profit and Delight.

For having, not without Uneasiness of Mind, observed, how much too many, not to say most, mispend their precious Time; some in reading vain Fictions (called Romances) lewd Novels, lascivious Poems, and Vice-promoting Play-Books: Others, more Soberly and Religiously inclined, in reading other Books, if not much hurtful, yet not much instructive and beneficial (*which I charitably impute in some measure, to their want of better Furniture;)* I hoped I should do no unacceptable Service, at least to some, in presenting them with the SACRED HISTORY, so digested, as might both invite their Attention, and recompence their Pains in Reading, with the Double Advantages of Godly Instruction and vertuous Pleasure.

If any shall think the Undertaking needless, because the History is already extant in the Bible; I intreat such to consider, that altho' the Bible be, or may be in every Hand, and ought to be read (by all that can read) with Diligence and Attention of Mind: Yet since the History lies diffused and scattered throughout the whole Book, it is no small Discouragement to the Reader, that is desirous to peruse the History in a regular Course, to find the Thread thereof so oft cut off, by the Interposition of other Matters, not Historical; as Genealogies of Persons, Derivations of Families and Colonies, Ceremonial Laws (peculiarly adapted to the Mosaic Dispensation, and abrogated with it) Prophetic Denunciations of Judgments against some Persons or People, of whom scarce any further Memorial now remains, than their bare Names.

To remove all such Discouragements, I have in this Work endeavoured to draw together the dispersed Parts of the History; connecting them into a continued Series, and reducing (as near as I could) each Part to its due place, with respect to the right order of Time. But this, perhaps, may be thought to relate rather to the other Head, the Manner of Performance.

Of

Of that I shall not say much: But leave it to the Reader's Judgment, when he shall have gone through the whole. Yet some few things for his Information, it may be needful he should be told beforehand, viz.

1. *That in digesting the following History, I have not strictly tied my self to the Letter, and very Syllables of the Text. But, with all due Circumspection, and Care to retain the Matter and Sense, have sometimes varied the Expression, as I thought might be most beneficial to the Reader. Sparing, by that means, many Circumlocutions, and Repetitions of the same matter, not grateful to every Ear.*

2. *Where I have at all left the last English Translation, I have followed for the most part, some other, English, or Latine; or the Judgment of some eminently Learned Expositors. And when I mention sometimes the Bishop's Bible, I intend thereby that Translation and Edition, which was printed with Notes, by Barker the Queen's Printer, in the Year 1600, in the old Black Letter: Which Edition I think, is called the Bishop's Bible, to distinguish it from other Editions.*

3. *In the Chronology (especially with respect to the times of the Rule of the Judges, and of the Reigns of the Kings of Israel and Judah) I found so much Incertainty; and so little Certainty, or Agreement amongst Interpreters about it: That I chose to have left it, as I found it; rather than spend time and Pains to reconcile the different Computations, delivered in the Books of the Kings, and of the Chronicles. Yet to gratifie the Desires of some, I have, since the Copy was written, added in the Margin, under the Letters A. M. the Year of the World, to the most remarkable Stories. Wherein, for the most part (unless, where I apprehended some Typographical Mistake) I have followed the Account of Time, as it is delivered by R. Blome, in his Elaborate Work, called, The History of the Old and New Testament, the Quarto Edition.*

4. *The few Helps I have had, have been chiefly from Dr. Gell's Essay towards an Amendment of the last English*

lish Translation of the Bible; Hugh Broughton's Consent of Scripture; Godwyn's Moses and Aaron (*whom for the most part, I have followed, in reducing the Hebrews Measures and Coyns to the English;*) The Annotations of Tremellius and Junius (*which I have oftner used, than named;*) And for the Expositions of Proper Names, *whether of Persons or Places, I have been beholden to the Table of Robert F. Herry.*

5. *The whole Work is divided into Three Parts, without any particular regard had to the Seven Periods of time, into which Chronologers and Historiographers, (out of a Desire to reduce them to some sort of Proportion with the Six Days Work, and Seventh Day's Rest, in the First Week of the Creation) have generally divided the Ages of the World, from Adam until now.*

6. *Of these Three Parts, the First reaches from the Creation to the Death of Moses; when the Children of Israel, being come to the Border of the Promised Land, were ready to enter in. And it contains the Remarkables, delivered in the Pentateuch, or Five Books of Moses; and that of Job: Which is here interserted between the Books of Genesis and Exodus.*

7. *The Second Part, beginning with the Book of Joshua, goes through that, and the Book of Judges, with the First Book of Samuel: And carries on the History from the Death of Moses, to the Death of Saul, and the Account that was brought to David of it. In this are recounted the Transactions of chief Note, under all the Judges, as well Ordinary as Extraordinary; and under Saul, the First Anointed King of Israel: Whose Rule I chose to cast into this Part, with the Judges; as not holding him fit, with respect to his odd Accession to the Government, his quick Rejection from it, and Male Administration of it, to be the Head of the succeeding Monarchy.*

8. *The Third Part (by much the largest) going on with the Second Book of Samuel, through all the rest of Canonical Scripture; sets forth the Reigns of the Kings of Israel and Judah, throughout the Jewish Monarchy:*
With

With the most Memorable Acts and Occurrences therein, from the First (if I may be allowed so to speak) Legitimate Monarch, David, to the Return of the Last Babylonish Captivity, and Rebuilding of the Temple; taking in the Prophets, as near as may be in their several Times.

I am not ignorant, that Divers have laboured on this Subject diversly. But none, that I know of, hath pursued and carried it on in this Method.

About the Beginning of the last Age, there was a Treatise written, under the Title of The general View of the Holy Scriptures. The Author of which was not certainly known, but supposed to be the Learned Broughton: And indeed, the Stile and Structure would perswade it.

It was sometime after Reprinted, with Additions, by Thomas Hayne; and is doubtless an Useful Discourse in its way and kind. But it doth not pretend to give a Compleat History; or to relate Historically the various Transactions Recorded in the Holy Text.

To omit some others of less Note, there was published not many Years ago, A Compleat History and Mystery of the Old and New Testament: A Book well fraught with variety of Useful Matter: But the Mystery is not only interwoven with the History, but hath also so much over-grown it; that the Reader who shall desire to peruse the History by its self, will be at some loss, in that respect, how well soever otherwise he may employ his time therein.

That which of all that I have yet seen, promises most fairly to answer this end, is, R. Blome's late History of the Old and New Testament. A Work indeed, not only Instructive and Delightful, but Pompous and Magnificent. But that Book, by reason of the many Plates, and Sculptural Figures, representing to the Eye most of the Stories therein delivered, is swell'd to so great a Bulk and Price, that it seems not calculated for the Meridian of Common Readers.

Those

Those therefore notwithstanding (none of which came to my Hand, until I had finished this Work) I hope I may escape the Censure, if not obtain the Favour of the Ingenious Reader, for publishing this: Which I take to be more agreeable to the Title and End of an History, than the former; and to be more within the reach of every Reader (to say no more) than the latter.

So far am I from aiming, by this, to draw any from reading the Holy Scriptures; that I earnestly desire and press all, who shall read this History, to compare it with the Text it self: That, like Noble Bereans, they may search and see, whether what I have herein delivered, be agreeable therewith.

I hope there will not any thing be found in the following Sheets, from whence Occasion may be taken to raise Controverſie. There is too much of that in the World already: and I have studiously endeavoured, not to Administer any Occasion for more. If in anything my Pen has ſlipt; or if any one ſhall apprehend I have erred, where I have delivered my Senſe different from the Sentiments of others: he that will be ſo kind, in a fair and friendly way, to inform me of it; ſhall have a due Acknowledgment of his Kindneſs, and the beſt Satisfaction I can give him. But of Common Cavilers, whoſe Carping Cenſures ſcarce any thing that is good can eſcape, I ſhall not hold my ſelf obliged to take notice.

Sacred History.

The First P A R T.

The Book of Genesis ; so called, because it Treats of the Beginning and Generation of Man ; and the other Creatures ; Containing an History of about 2369 Years.

FROM the Creation to the Flood, tho' more than Sixteen Gen. 1. Hundred Years did pass between the Historical Account of things, as they stand Recorded in the Holy Text, is very short : The Heads only of Matters being delivered, and that but briefly. Of these the most Remarkable are, First, The admirable Order of the Creation (whereby the *Chaos* was reduced into Form) divided into Six days Works.

In the first of which, *The Spirit of God moved upon the Face of the Waters*, and God said, *Let there be Light ; and there was Light* : Light being brought forth by that effective Word. And it is observable, that the first thing which we Read God pronounced good, was the Light : *God saw the Light that it was good*. But he did not see it good, that the Light should be intermixed with *Darkness* : Therefore he divided the Light from the *Darkness*. And the Light, thus separated from the *Darkness*, God called Day : But the *Darkness* he called Night. This was the Work of the First Day.

In the Second Day, God said, *Let there be a Firmament in the midst of the Waters, and let it divide the Waters from the Waters ; and it was so*. For God, by that Word, made the Firmament (that is, spread forth that *Expansum*, or *Convex*, which we call the Firmament :) And divided the Waters which were under the Firmament, from the Waters which were above the Firmament. And God called the Firmament Heaven.

In the Third Day God said, *Let the Waters under the Heaven be gathered together unto one Place, and let the Dry Land appear ; and it was so*. And God called the Dry Land Earth ; and the gathering together of the Waters, called he Seas. And now the Second time we Read, *God saw that it was good*.

Here, by the way, it may not be amiss to observe, That what *Gen. 1.* (in *Ver. 1.*) the Translators render [*In the beginning*] Some other Learned Men render [*In Wisdom*] so Reading it, *In Wisdom* God Created the Heaven and the Earth. (Dr. Gell, in his Essay towards the Amendment of the last English Translation of the Bible, P. 2.) tells us, the *Targum of Jerusalem* turns it so: And himself approves that Version, Saying, It is indeed no other than what David expresseth in *Psalms 104.* Where having Paraphrased upon the Works of God in the Creation, he breaks forth into Admiration. *Ver. 24.* Saying, O Lord, how manifold are thy Works, *In Wisdom* hast thou made them all. And in *Psalms 136.* exhorting to give Thanks unto the Lord, for his manifold Mercies, he adds, To him that by *Wisdom* made the Heavens, *Ver. 5.* where by *Wisdom* is understood the Son of God; by whom (says the Evangelist, *Joh. 1. 3.*) All things were made. Which also the Apostle confirms, saying, By, (or In) him were all things Created, that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, *Colos. 1. 16.* Calling him also, *The Beginning, Ver. 18.* And in the Revelation he is called, *The Beginning* of the Creation of God, *Rev. 3. 14.* So that if we Read the Words (as in the Text,) In the *Beginning* God Created the Heaven and the Earth, it seems we are by the Word [*Beginning*] to understand Christ the Son of God, who sets himself forth under the Name also of *Wisdom*, *Prov. 8.* And the same Dr. Gell, in the Place fore-quoted, tells us, The interlineary Gloss interprets, *In principio, [In the Beginning]* *In filio suo*, In his Son. But if the Words [*In the Beginning*] be understood of Time, and the order of the Creation, it may occasion a Doubt, whether, in a strict Sense, the Heaven and the Earth were Created in the *Beginning*, that is, were the *Beginning*, or *First* Part of the Creation. For the Heaven being set in the *Second* Days Work, and the Earth in the *Third*: Since a *Third* and a *Second*, do imply a *First*, it seems not to stand with Propriety of Speech, to call the *Third* Day, or the *Second* Day, the *Beginning*. But the whole Work, and every part of it, both first and last, was undoubtedly made in *Wisdom*. But of this a touch only. Let us now go forward.

The Earth thus drained of the Waters, the next Work was, to give it a Prolifick Vertue. Wherefore God said, *Let the Earth bring forth Grass, the Herb yielding Seed, and the Fruit-Tree yielding Fruit after its kind, whose Seed is in its self, upon the Earth; and it was so.* And here again, it is said, *God saw that it was good.*

In the *Fourth* Day God said, *Let there be Lights, in the Firmament of Heaven, to divide the Day from the Night: and Let them be for Signs, and for Seasons, and for Days, and Years. And let them be for Lights in the Heaven, to give Light upon the Earth; and it was so: For God made two great Lights, (both great, but one greater than the other) the greater (which is the Sun) to rule the Day; and the lesser, (which is the Moon) to Rule the Night. He made the Stars also. And God set them in the Firmament of the Heaven, to give Light upon the Earth; and to rule over the Day, and over the Night, and to divide the Light from the Darkeness. And God saw that it was good.*

In the *Fifth* Day, God gave the Waters a productive Property, by saying, *Let the Waters bring forth abundantly the moving Creature that hath Life, and Fowl that may fly above the Earth, in the open Firmament of Heaven. So God Created great Whales, and every Living Creature that moveth, which the Waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged Fowl after its kind; and God saw that it was good: And he blessed them, Saying, Be Fruitful and Multiply, and fill the Waters in the Seas; and let Fowl multiply in the Earth.*

From

From those Words in *Ver. 20.* [*Let the Waters bring forth abundantly the moving Creature that hath Life, and Fowl, &c.*] an Opinion hath arisen, That *Fowls* took their Origin, wholly from the *Water*. But from what is said in *Chap. 2. ver. 19.* [*Out of the Ground the Lord God formed every Beast of the Field, and every Fowl of the Air,*] hath sprung another Opinion, That *Fowls* derive their Beginning from the *Earth*. These being the two *Extreams*, the *Middle* may probably be the right; That they had their Original partly from the *Waters*, and partly from the *Earth*. This, *Tremellius* and *Junius* favour. And this might render the *Flesh* of *Fowls* less gross, than that of *Beasts*: more firm than that of *Fishes*.

In the *Sixth* and last Days Work, God in the first Place added to the fertility of the *Earth*, which before brought forth only *Vegetables*, the Production of *Animals*, Saying, *Let the Earth bring forth the Living Creature after its kind, Cattel and Creeping Things, and Beasts of the Earth after their kinds: And it was so, And God saw that it was good.*

And now, after all the other parts of the Creation were finished in their beautiful Order, fit for the Reception and Use of *Man*; God altered his Style. For whereas before, he only said, *Let this, or that, be so, or so*; Now, God said, *Let us make Man, (or Adam) in our Image, after our Likeness: And let them,* (for *Male* and *Female* Created he them, *Chap. 5. 2.*) *Have Dominion over the Fish of the Sea, and over the Fowl of the Air, and over the Cattel, and over all the Earth, and over every Creeping Thing that creepeth upon the Earth.*

Herein then, (besides the *Divine Image* wherein *Man* was made) may the Origination of *Man* be justly accounted more Noble and Honourable, than that of any of the rest of the Creatures, that whereas they were produced by a *Word speaking*, God is said to have formed *Man*, *Gen. 2. 7.* and *Man* is called the *Workmanship* of God, *Eph. 2. 10.* and the *Off-spring* of God, *Acts 17. 28.* And tho' the Matter *Man* was formed of, was but the *Dust* of the *Ground*, yet God *Breathing into his Nostrils the Breath of Life*, *Man* thereby became a *Living Soul*.

Man, thus excellently made, was blessed by God, both *Male* and *Female*, with the two great Blessings, *Fruitfulness*, and *Dominion*; the Lord God saying unto them, *Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the Earth, and subdue it; and have Dominion over the Fish of the Sea, and over the Fowl of the Air, and over every Living Thing that moveth upon the Earth.* See *Psal. 8.*

Then appointing unto *Man* for Food every *Seeding-Herb*, and the *Fruit* of every *Seeding-Tree*; and to the *Beasts*, *Fowls* and *Creeping Things*, every *Green Herb*: God took, (If I may so speak) a general Survey of his whole Work, and pronounced it *very good*.

After the Work of Creation was finished, and a Day of Rest had succeeded, the next Historical Remark we meet with, is God's *Planting a Garden Eastward in Eden*, with the Description and Bounds thereof; his putting therein the *Man* whom he had formed; and appointing him to Dress and keep it; With the general Permission and particular Prohibition, what to Eat, and what to abstain from. Then follows the Naming of the Creatures by *Adam*, as the Lord caused them to come before him. After which comes the particular Description of the Formation of *Woman*; which was thus.

After the Lord had declared, that it was not good the *Man* should be alone, and that therefore he would make him an *Help-meet*, (or fit) for him; he caused a deep Sleep to fall upon *Adam*, (for so was he called, from the *Red Earth*, of which he was made:) And while *Adam* slept,

Gen. 2. slept, God took out one of his Ribs, closing up the Flesh instead thereof, and made, (or builded) the Rib into a Woman; and brought her unto the Man. *Adam*, sensible of what the Lord had done, as soon as he saw the Woman, said, *This is now Bone* (out) of my Bones, and Flesh (out) of my Flesh: *She shall be called Woman*, (or Manness) because she was taken out of Man. Therefore (says the Text) shall a Man leave his Father and his Mother (that is, rather than his Wife,) and shall cleave unto his Wife; and they shall be one Flesh. This was the Divine Institution of Marriage, with the Law thereof, in the Naked Innocency, and Unblushing Simplicity of the Man and his Wife, while they abode in the delightful Garden of *Eden*.

But from this State of Innocency and Happiness they fell, being betrayed by the Malice and Guile of an Adversary: Which who he was, and how he came to be so, must be sought elsewhere. For *Moses* in this Relation gives no account of the Fall, or indeed of the Creation of Angels: Yet frequent mention we afterwards find, in the Holy Scriptures, of Angels, and those both good and bad. Good they were all Created, as all things else were that God made; But that some of them kept not their first Estate, but left their own Habitation, and (through Pride, aspiring higher) sinned against God, and were by him cast down to Hell, we are taught by the Apostles *Peter* and *Jude*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 4. *Jude* 6. to which some additional Light is given from *Job* 4. 18. *Job* 8. 44. and 1 *Job* 3. 8. The chief of these fallen Angels, called here the Serpent, and afterwards the old Serpent, *Rev.* 20. 2. and *Beelzebub*, or the Prince of the Devils, (which were the rest of those Angels that fell also) envying the Happiness of Man, that he should retain and enjoy that State of Innocency and Bliss, in which he was made and set, whereas they had forfeited and lost theirs; contrived how to beguile the Man, and draw him also into Transgression; that he might have him a Companion in Punishment. And in order thereunto he thus set upon the Woman, as the weaker Vessel; by whom, if gained, he might the more easily prevail upon the Man. Accosting her therefore in a slight manner, he said, *Yea*, (or indeed!) *bath God said ye shall not eat of every Tree of the Garden?* Nay, said the Woman, It is but one Tree that is forbidden us; *For we may eat of the Fruit of the Trees of the Garden; but of the Fruit of the Tree which is in the midst of the Garden; God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.*

Gen. 3. God's Word was positive; *In the Day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*, (or dying thou shalt die) *Gen.* 2. 17. The Woman in repeating it, renders it only doubtful, or questionable, [*lest ye die.*] There the Serpent taking hold, replies, *Ye shall not surely die: But God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, your Eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods, knowing Good and Evil.*

This kindled Desire in the Woman, who looking on the Fruit through the Optick of Ambition apprehended the Tree was good for Food, pleasant to the Sight, and a Tree to be desired to make one Wise. Wherefore she took of the Fruit thereof, and did not only eat of it her self, but gave also unto her Husband with her, and he did eat.

Now were the Eyes of them both opened; but it was but to see their own Nakedness and Misery. They had indeed acquired Knowledge, but it was but a Knowledge, arising from a sad Experience, that the Serpent had beguiled them, and drawn them from the Good, which they knew before, into the Evil which they knew not.

This dear-bought Knowledge brought upon them at once both Guilt, and the effect of Guilt, Shame. So that Sewing Fig-leaves together, they made themselves Aprons, to gird about them, to cover their new-dis-

discovered Nakedness. And when they heard the Voice of the Lord God, walking in the Garden in the Cool of the Day, they hid themselves *Gen. 3.* from his presence, amongst the Trees of the Garden.

But when the Lord God called forth Adam by Name, *rousing him up with an, Adam, where art thou?* Adam was then fain to make Answer, *I heard thy Voice in the Garden, and I was afraid, because I was Naked, and I hid my self.*

In confessing his Nakedness, he confessed his Guilt, of which thereby God convicted him. *Who told thee, said God to him, that thou wast Naked? Hast thou eaten of the Tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?*

Adam was not yet grown so hardy, as to deny the Fact: But he endeavoured to excuse himself, by laying the blame upon his Wife; not without a tacit Reflection therein upon God himself. *The Woman (said he) whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the Tree, and I did eat.*

God thereupon calling the Woman to account, *What is this, said he to her, that thou hast done?* She also readily confessed the Fact; yet willing, like her Husband, to throw the blame, as much as she could from off her self, alledged, that she had been drawn thereto by the Guile of the Serpent. *The Serpent, said she, beguiled me, and I did eat.*

God did not proceed with the Serpent, as he had done with the Man and the Woman; whom by Examination he had brought to Confession, and so to Conviction: But presently passing Sentence upon the Serpent, he said, *Because thou hast done this, thou art Cursed above all Cattel, and above every Beast of the Field: Upon thy Belly shalt thou go, and Dust shalt thou eat all the Days of thy Life. And I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed: It shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel.*

To the Woman he said, *I will greatly multiply thy Sorrow, and thy Conception. In Sorrow thou shalt bring forth Children, and thy desire shall be to thy Husband, and he shall rule over thee.*

And unto Adam he said, *Because thou hast hearkned unto the Voice of thy Wife, (in opposition to my Voice) and hast eaten of the Tree, of which I commanded thee not to eat; Cursed be the Ground for thy sake; in Sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy Life. Thorns also and Thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the Herb of the Field. In the Sweat of thy Face shalt thou eat Bread, till thou return unto the Ground out of which thou wast taken: For Dust thou art, and unto Dust shalt thou return.*

The proper Doom or Sentence being thus passed on each, God drove out the Man from the Garden of Eden, and sent him to till the Ground from whence he had been taken. And lest, as through a too eager Desire of Knowledge, he had already transgressed, he should put forth his hand, and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat and live for ever: God having sent him out of the Garden, placed at the East End thereof, Cherubims, and a flaming Sword; which turned every way, to keep the way of the Tree of Life. Yet he provided them better Apparel, than the Fig-Leaf Coverings they had stitched together themselves; to wit, Coats of Skins, which he ordered for them.

Adam now called his Wife's Name Eve, because she was to be the *Gen. 4.* Mother of all living; that is, of all the Race of Mankind that should live upon the Earth. And he knew his Wife; and she thereupon Conceiving, bare a Son, whom she called Cain, (which signifies Possession) saying, *I have gotten a Man from the Lord.* So we read it: But word for word it is, *I have gotten the Man, the Lord,* says Dr. Gell, Essay, p. 27. where also he quotes Martin Luther, so rendring it.) From which

Expression some conjecture, that *Eve* was so far mistaken in *Cain*, as to take him (who was indeed but the first born after the Transgression) for that Seed, which God had said should bruise the Head of the Serpent.

But however; As *Cain* may be called the first-fruit of the Flesh, being the first of Men that came by Carnal Procreation: So he was the first Persecutor, the first Murderer. For he slew his own, his then (for ought appears) only Brother: And that for no other Cause, but that his Brother worshipped God more sincerely, and more acceptably than himself. Which gave occasion for one to say of him.

*He was the first that did his hands embrew
In humane Blood; and by one Murther slew
The fourth part of Mankind.—*

Gen. 4.

This unnatural Murder, giving Death the first handsel, happened thus. After *Eve* had born *Cain*, she conceived again, and bare *Abel*; who, when he was grown up, was a Keeper of Sheep; as *Cain* was a Tiller of the Ground. In process of time, each of them brought an Offering to the Lord: *Cain*, of the First-fruit of the Ground; and *Abel* of the Firstlings of his Flock, and of the Fat thereof. The Lord, who saw, and regarded, the Heart of each, had respect unto *Abel*, and to his Offering: But unto *Cain*, and his Offering, he had not respect. *Cain* was hereupon very Wrath, which the falling of his Countenance shewed: Infomuch that God, taking Notice of it, said unto him, *Why art thou Wrath? And why is thy Countenance fallen? If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? But if thou dost not well, Sin lieth at the Door, &c.*

This soft Reproof which one would have thought might have pacified wrathful *Cain*, seems to have raised his Anger higher; for taking an Occasion, not long after, to discourse with his Brother *Abel*, when they were alone in the Field together; he on a sudden falling upon his innocent Brother, slew him. And when the Lord, calling him to account for it, examined him where his Brother *Abel* was? He as resolutely as falsely, answered, *I know not*. And as if he took it for an Affront, that he should be questioned for his Brother, surlily asked, *Am I my Brother's Keeper?* But the Lord convicting him by the Voice of *Abel's* Blood, said, *What hast thou done? The Voice of thy Brother's Blood crieth unto me from the Ground*. As if he had said, *Though thou disdainest to be thought thy Brother's Keeper, yet thou hast not stuck to be thy Brother's Murderer; and thou shalt know that I am the Avenger of thy Brother's innocent Blood; which thou hast Wickedly, Treacherously, Unnaturally shed; and which cries unto me for Vengeance*. And therefore, *Now art thou cursed from the Earth*, (said God to *Cain*) *which hath opened her Mouth to receive thy Brother's Blood from thy Hand*. *When thou tillest the Ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee its Strength*. Nor is that all: But a Fugitive and a Vagabond shalt thou be in the Earth.

This Sentence, gentle in comparison of the Heinousness of the Crime, *Cain* complained highly of, crying unto the Lord, *My Punishment is greater than I can bear*. So we read it; and so both *Pagnine* and *Tremellius* turn it: Tho' all acknowledge, the Hebrew Word, which they render *Punishment*, signifies *Iniquity*; and so *Arias Montanus* gives it. But indeed, *Cain* seemed not so sensible of his Sin, as of his Punishment; as his following Words import. Behold, said he, *thou hast driven me out this Day from the Face of the Earth, and from thy Face shall I be hid*; (He puts his Loss of Advantages in the Earth, before his Loss of the Presence of God:) *And I shall be a Fugitive* (added he) *and a Vagabond in the Earth; and it shall come to pass, that whosoever findeth me, shall slay me*.

Altho'

Altho' that (according to the *Talique* Law, given after, *Gen.* 9. 6.) had been but just on *Cain*; yet inasmuch as God had taken this *Gen.* 4. Cause into his own immediate Cognizance, and had fixed the Punishment: that therefore *Cain*, suffering *Judicially*, might not suffer *Extra-judicially* also, nor his bloody Act pass into *Example* for others; God to secure him, issued forth his Royal Proclamation (if I may so speak) declaring, *that whosoever should slay Cain, Vengeance should be taken on him Seven-fold.* And that none might do it by mistake, God set a Mark on *Cain*, lest any finding him should kill him.

Cain, thus branded, went out from the Presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the Land of *Nod*, (which signifies *Fugitive*;) And having, by this time, taken a Wife, she conceived and bare him a Son, named *Enoch*; after whose Name *Cain* called the City, which afterwards he began to build.

Cain's Posterity is Registered for Seven Generations; perhaps to shew who were the Authors or Inventors of certain Trades; and who were Instrumental to corrupt the better Seed of *Adam* afterwards. Amongst these, *Lamech* is noted, not only for his Propensity to shed Blood, (of which he seems to have boasted to his Wives:) But for bringing *Polygamy* into the World, being the first we read of that had more Wives than one at a time. He took two, *Adah*, and *Zilah*. *Adah* bare him two Sons, *Jabal* and *Jubal*: *Jabal* first taught Men to live in Tents, and to breed and order Cattel. *Jubal* was the Father of the Fiddlers, or the first Inventor of Musical Instruments; as the Harp and Organ. *Zilah*, his other Wife, bare him *Tubal-Cain*, who was an Instructor of Artificers in Brass and Iron. Whence a learned Writer infers, that he was the first that made Armour and Weapons of War. A Trade, says he, very fit for one of *Cain's* Posterity. Dr. Gell. Essay, p. 43.

Thus have we done, for the present, with *Cain* and his Offspring; which was all swept away by the succeeding Flood: I wish his Spirit had never entred any since.

But *Adam*, having, by an untimely Death, lost his Son *Abel*, knew *Gen.* 5. his Wife again; who conceiving, bare him another Son, and called his *A. M.* Name *Seth*: For God (said she, *Gen.* 4. 25.) hath appointed me another ^{130.} Seed, instead of *Abel*, whom *Cain* slew. Through this *Seth*, *Adam's* Line, in Ten Generations before the Flood, with the Age of each of those long-liv'd Fathers, is drawn forth in the Fifth Chapter of *Genesis*.

Among these, in the Seventh Degree from *Adam*, lived *Enoch*; to *A. M.* whom this singular Testimony is given, That he walked with God (or ^{662.} pleased God in his walking,) and that he was not: For God took him. Which in the Epistle to the Hebrews, is thus paraphrased; That he was not found, because God had Translated him, that he should not see Death; having before his Translation, received this Testimony, That he pleased God, *Heb.* 11. 5. And a Prophecy of his, not elsewhere found (at least not in Canonical Scripture) is remembred, and cited by the Apostle *Jude*, in his general Epistle, v. 14, 15.

The Two great Families derived from *Adam*, viz. That by *Cain*, and that by *Seth*, (who succeeded Righteous *Abel*;) as they differed in their Natures and Course of Life, So they were distinguished one from the other, by very different Appellations. For the Offspring of *Cain*, being wholly given up to worldly Pleasures, and minding only Earthly things, were called Men, or Sons of Men. But the Offspring *Gen.* 6. of *Seth*, because they addicted themselves to Virtue and Piety, and professed to worship the true God, were called the Sons of God. And well had it been for these Sons of God, if they had kept up that Distinction practically, as well as nominally.

That

That *Seth* and his Progeny, would, for some Ages, be shy of conversing with *Cain*, and his Descendants, from the Knowledge they must needs have had of that *barbarous Fratricide*, committed by *Cain*, in the inhumane Murther of his Brother *Abel*, may reasonably be supposed.

But Time working off that Aversion, and as the World grew more replenished with People, the Godly Generation *indulging themselves a greater Liberty*, they entertained a more free and familiar Conversation with the wicked Offspring of cursed *Cain*, than was fit or safe for them. By which means having exposed themselves to the *Allurements of the Women*; the Lust of the Eye, representing the Daughters of Men fair, prevailed upon the Sons of God, to link themselves in Marriage with them.

It is not to be doubted but these, who were the Offspring of the Righteous, and professed themselves to be the Sons of God, were not a little by this time *degenerated* also from the Virtue and Piety of their Ancestors. For we find that immediately after this, God complained of the Wickedness of Man in general, *Gen. 6. 5.* And that *all Flesh had corrupted his Way upon the Earth, v. 12.* And we know it is a Maxim, that *Nemo repente fit turpissimus*: No Man arrives to the Height of Wickedness on a sudden.

But how depraved soever they were before, this *joyning themselves in Marriage* with those, who were not one with them in the Profession at least of Religion, and the worship of God, did *fill up the Measure* of their Iniquity, and set the *Seal of Destruction* upon them. For where we read, *The Sons of God saw the Daughters of Men, that they were fair; and took them Wives of all which they chose*; it follows immediately, *And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with Man; for that he also is Flesh.* And God saw that the Wickedness of Man was great in the Earth, and that every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart was only Evil continually: And it repented the Lord that he had made Man on the Earth; so that (speaking after the manner of Men) it is said, *it grieved him at the Heart.* Whereupon he declared, *he would destroy, (or blot out) Man, whom he had created, from the Face of the Earth.*

This happened in the Days of *Noah*, (the Tenth from *Adam*,) who was a Just Man, and perfect in his Generation, and walked with God. The Apostle *Peter* calls him *A Preacher of Righteousness*, *2 Pet. 2. 5.* And God himself gave this Testimony to him, *Thee have I seen Righteous before me in this Generation*, *Gen. 7. 1.* Therefore *Noah* found Grace (or Favour) in the Eyes of the Lord: So that he, and for his sake, his Family, *Eight Persons* in all, were saved from the general Destruction, which was brought, by the Flood, upon all the rest of Mankind.

Of this overflowing Scourge, the merciful God gave Mankind fair Warning, long before it came upon them, both by the Preaching of *Noah*, and by the Preparation he made for the building of the Ark, for the saving of his Household; by which he is said to have *condemned the World*, *Heb. 11. v. 7.*

For after the time allotted by God for Men to Repent and Reform in, (supposed to be the Hundred and twenty Years, mentioned in *Gen. 6. 3.*) was well nigh expired, and no Amendment appeared; but God still saw *the Earth was corrupt, and filled with Violence*, and that all *Flesh* had corrupted his Way upon the Earth; the Lord then declaring to *Noah* his Resolution to destroy all *Flesh* from the Earth, by a Flood of Waters, commanded him to make an *Ark* (or Ship, the first that ever was made) for receiving and preserving a Seed, to replenish the depopulated Earth again.

This

This Ark he directed *Noah* to make of *Gopher-wood*, (which some take to be a kind of *Cedar*) and to pitch it both within and without, that the Waters might not pierce it. The length of it was to be *Three Hundred Cubits*, the Breadth *Fifty Cubits*, and the Height *Thirty Cubits*. Which, taking it for the common Cubit, containing a Foot and a half, or half a Yard, makes the Dimensions of the Ark to be 450 Feet, or 150 Yards in Length, 75 Feet, or 25 Yards in Breadth; and 45 Feet, or 15 Yards in Height. Some of the Ancients, not thinking the Ark by these Dimensions, Roomy enough to receive commodiously all the Creatures that were contained therein, with their Stowage of Provisions, and Necessaries, have extended this Measure by the Geometrical Cubit, one of which contains six of the common Cubits, thereby making the Ark six times bigger every way, in Length, Breadth and Height.

In favour of which Opinion, both *Origen* and *Augustine* are cited by *Godwyn* in his *Moses and Aaron*, l. 6. c. 9. Whom *Wilson* in his *Christian Dictionary*, verbo Cubit, follows. And *Severus Sulpitius*, (an Ancient Writer, as being Contemporary with *Augustine*) seems to have inclined that Way also, when, speaking of the Ark, he calls it *Arcom immensæ magnitudinis*, an Ark of excessive Bigness.

But this by some of the Modern Writers is rejected and exploded, as an extravagant Notion. And the Learned *Dr. Wilkins*, in his *Real Character*, Part 2. Chap. 5. §. 6. p. 162, &c. has taken much Pains to shew, from *John Buteo's Tract de Arcâ Noe*, that the Ark measured by the common Cubit, was sufficiently capacious of all, both Creatures and Provisions, that were appointed to be received into it.

Leaving therefore the Reader to his own Judgment upon it, whatever the Dimensions of it were, it was to be divided into *Three Stories* or Decks; and those into several Rooms, or Apartments: But *one Window* served it for Light, and *one Door* to go in and out at; which was placed in the side of it.

According to this Direction did *Noah* make the Ark. And when it was finished, God (having before assured him, that although he destroyed all Flesh beside, yet he would establish his Covenant with him) *Seven Days* before the Rains began to fall, gave notice to *Noah*, that he should come into the Ark with his Family, and should take in with him of every living Thing of all Flesh, (both of Cattel and Beasts of the Field, Birds and Fowls of the Air, and Creeping Things) *Two of a Sort*, one Male, and one Female; to keep Seed alive, to stock the Earth again with. But of *Clean Beasts* he should take in by *Sevens*; that is, *Three pairs* of Males and Females, of every clean Sort, both for Breed and Food, after the Flood, and the *Seventh* for Sacrifice. All which Creatures, God, by a secret Instinct, disposed to come and offer themselves unto him. And with them he was also to take in Food of all sorts that were then eaten, sufficient to sustain himself and them.

When *Noah*, pursuant to this Direction, had entred the Ark himself, with his Wife, and his *Three Sons*, *Shem*, *Ham* and *Japheth*, with their *Three Wives*; and had taken in all the Creatures, with Provisions, as God had appointed, the Lord shut him into the Ark. This was in the *Sixth hundredth Year* of his Age. And on the *Seventeenth Day* of the *Second Month*, were all the *Fountains of the great Deep* broken up, and the *Windows* (or *Floodgates*) of *Heaven* opened; So that the Waters of the Flood were upon the Earth. And when it had continued Raining *Forty Days* and *Forty Nights*, the Waters were so risen, that they lifted up the Ark, and bare it up above the Earth: So that as

the Waters still encreasing, rose higher and higher, the Ark swam (or floated) upon the Surface of the Waters.

And to that Degree did the Waters prevail, that the highest Hills being covered, the Waters stood *fifteen Cubits deep*, upon the Tops of the Mountains: An Hundred and fifty Days did the Waters prevail, before they were quite drawn off again. In which time all Flesh died that moved upon the Earth; not only the whole Race of Mankind, but every living Substance; of Fowl, Cattel, Beast and Creeping thing, that moved upon the *dry Land*, were destroyed from off the Earth, save *Noah* only, and they that were with him in the Ark.

Gen. 8.

The Work being thus effected, for which this Flood was sent, God remembred *Noah*, and every living thing, and all the Cattel that were with him in the Ark. Wherefore having *stopped the Fountains of the Deep, and shut the Windows of Heaven*, whereby he restrained the Rains from falling, He caused a *Wind* to pass over the *Earth*, which made the Waters begin to assuage; and returning thence forward continually from off the Earth, at the end of the Hundred and fifty Days, they were so far abated, that *the Ark rested upon one of the Mountains of Ararat*, in the Country of *Armenia*. This was on the Seventeenth Day of the Seventh Month, just five Months from the beginning of the Flood: From which time continuing to decrease until the Tenth Month following, on the first day of that Month the Tops of the Mountains were seen.

This, no doubt, was a wellcome Sight to *Noah*; who yet wisely considering, that if the Tops only of the Mountains were discoverable, the Waters must needs be deep still in the Valleys, waited yet forty Days, before he attempted any further discovery: And then, opening the Window of the Ark, he *sent forth a Raven*; which went forth to and fro, until the Waters were dried up.

About Seven Days after, for a further Tryal, he sent forth a *Dove*; but she finding *no Rest for the Sole of her Foot*, because the Waters were yet on the Face of the Earth, returned to the Ark; and *Noah*, putting forth his Hand, took her into the Ark to him.

Then staying yet other Seven Days, he sent forth the Dove again, which in the Evening returned to him, having in her Bill *an Olive Leaf* plucked off: By which he knew, that the Waters were then abated from the Earth. And waiting yet other Seven Days, he sent forth the Dove the third time; and then *she returned no more*.

When *Noah* had staid till the first Day of the first Month, he removed the Covering of the Ark; and looking out, saw that *the Face of the Ground was dried*. Yet, having a pious Regard to God's Direction, as well in coming forth, as in going in, he continued in the Ark 'till the Seven and Twentieth Day of the Second Month: So that he was in the Ark somewhat more than a Year. And needful it was that he should remain in the Ark, not only till the Waters were sunk, and the Ground well dried; but 'till the Earth had produced some fresh Food for the Creatures that were in the Ark to live upon.

Then did God bid *Noah* go forth, he and his Wife, and his Sons, and their Wives with him; and bring forth with him all the living Creatures, that they might breed abundantly, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the Earth: And *Noah* did as the Lord commanded him.

Gen. 9.

The first Thing we read of righteous *Noah*, after he was safely landed, is, that *he built an Altar*, (the first we have any mention of) and thereon offered *Burnt-Offerings of Clean Beasts, and Fowls*, (Sacrifices of Thanksgivings and Praise) unto the Lord, for the deliverance and preservation he and his Family had received. With which Oblations offered

offered from a Thankful and Pious Mind; the Lord was so well pleased, that he not only declared his Acceptance thereof, but thereupon made *Gen. 9.* a Covenant with Noah, (and in him with his Posterity, the succeeding Race of Mankind) graciously promising, that *he would not again Curse the Ground any more for Man's sake, neither should there any more be a general Flood to destroy the Earth: And that while the Earth remained the appointed Seasons of Seed-time and Harvest, Cold and Heat, Summer and Winter, and Day and Night, should not (universally) cease.* Which Covenant to confirm to Man, and put Men out of Fear, when they should see the Clouds gather, and the Skie look dark, and the Rain fall, he *set his Bow* (which we call the *Rain-Bow*) *in the Cloud*, to be for a Token of the Covenant between God and them.

Hitherto Men had lived upon Vegetables, Herbs, and the Fruits of Trees, was the Food appointed them by God at the first, *Gen. 1. 29.* and had so continued till now. But now, after the Flood, their Fare was enlarged, and Flesh permitted them for Food. *Every moving thing that liveth shall be Meat for you,* said God to Noah and his Sons: *For I have now given you free Liberty to eat of all the Living Creatures, as I did before of the green Herb.* Yet that Men might not grow Savage, and like brute Beasts, eat the Creatures alive, he forbade them to eat the Flesh with the Life, that is, the Blood thereof: But first to take away the Life, by letting out the Blood, and then to dress and eat the Flesh. And having renewed his former Blessing of Fertility, to Noah and his Sons, bidding them *be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the Earth;* he subjected all the Creatures to them anew, telling them, *The Fear and Dread of them should be upon every Beast of the Earth, and upon every Fowl of the Air, and upon all the Fishes of the Sea:* And that he would require the Life of Man of any Beast that should take it away; as well as of one Man that should murder another.

The whole Race of Cain being cut off by the Flood, it might have been hoped, that the *new World* (so we may call that after the Flood, as the Apostle calls that before the Flood, the *old World*, *2 Pet. 2. 5.*) would have been planted with better People. But as, in the Ark, there were *Unclean Beasts* preserved as well as *Clean*: So in Noah's Family there was a *Ham*, as well as a *Japheth* and a *Shem*.

The first Instance we have of *Ham's* Impiety, was his discovering the Nakedness of his Father, in a rude and prophane manner; which his Brethren dutifully and modestly covered: Whereby they procured their Father's Blessing upon them, as *Ham* had deservedly drawn his Curse upon himself. For *Noah*, after he had performed his Devotions to God, applying himself to Husbandry, *planted a Vineyard;* and being but a *Young Beginner*, not well experienced in the Nature and Strength of the Grape, he drank a little too liberally of the Wine, and being drunk therewith, was uncovered, yet within his Tent. His Graceless Son *Ham*, finding him in this Condition, instead of covering his Father's Nakedness, went and discovered it (in a deriding manner) to his two Brethren without. *Shem* and *Japheth*, thereupon taking a Garment, laid it upon both their Shoulders, and (in Reverence to their Father) going backwards, covered their Father's Nakedness, without seeing it. When therefore *Noah*, being recovered from his Wine, understood how his younger Son *Ham* had served him, and how regardful his other two Sons had been of him, he said, *Cursed be Canaan* (that is, all the Posterity of *Ham*, as well as himself, for *Canaan* was the Son of *Ham*, *ver. 18.*) *A Servant of Servants shall he be unto his Brethren.* But blessed, said he, *be the Lord God of Shem.* And God shall persuade *Japheth*, and he shall dwell in the Tents of *Shem*: And *Canaan* shall be their Servant.

A. M.
1666.

We

Gen. 9. We read not of any other Children that *Noah* had, but these three Sons; from each of which descended a numerous Offspring, which afterwards Peopled many Countries, and in process of time, the whole inhabited World.

Shem is called *the Father of all the Children of Eber*, Gen. 10. 21. *Eber*, was great Grandson, or the Fourth from *Shem*: And from him both the People of *Israel* were called *Ebrews*, (or *Hebrews*) and the Language they spake, was called the *Hebrew Tongue*. So that from *Shem* came the *Jews*, besides many other People that inhabited *Asia*. This part of the World which is called *Europe*, is generally held to have been Peopled by the Posterity of *Japheth*. And besides those *Canaanites*, and other People, which anciently possessed the Land of *Canaan*, the *Egyptians*, *Ethiopians*, and other Eastern and Southern Nations, are taken to be the Descendants of *Ham*.

Gen. 11. Hitherto, there was but one Language used, or known amongst Men; neither had the Sons of *Noah*, or their Families, as yet divided, or dispersed themselves in the World. But keeping together in a Body, they journied onwards from the East, till finding an inviting Plain, in the Land of *Shinar*, (where some suppose the Garden of *Eden* to have been) they sat down in order to settle there.

A. M. 1757. Now began two *unruly Passions* to possess their Minds: *Ambition* and *Fear*. They were very desirous to *make themselves a Name*: And no less afraid, that they should *be scattered abroad*. To effect the one, and prevent the other, they agreed to build themselves a City, and a Tower of such an extraordinary Heighth, (that by a Figure called *Hyperbole*) it is said, they designed the *Top thereof should reach to Heaven*.

The Projected Heighth of this Tower hath caused some to conjecture, that remembring the Destruction brought on Mankind by the late Flood, and grown *diffident* of God's *Veracity*, in keeping his Covenant made with them, that he would not bring a general Deluge over the Earth again; They designed this *Topping Tower* for a place of Refuge and Security against the like danger.

However, that the Design and Undertaking was *Evil*, and highly *provoking* to the Lord, is evident from the *Displeasure* he shewed at it, and the *Punishment* he inflicted upon them for it. For, to check their Presumption, and disappoint their Purpose, he *confounded their Language*; so that they could not *understand* one another's Speech. This put them into so great a *Disorder*, that they were forced to give over building: For by Reason of their *Different Languages*, they could not *Communicate* their Minds and Intentions one to another. And being thereby rendred *uncapable*, not only of carrying on their intended Work, but of *Conversing* one with another; and by that means *deprived* of the Comforts and Pleasures of mutual Society and Intercourse, and disabled from performing the Reciprocal Duties of Friendship and common Neighbourhood; they willingly withdrew one from another, and *dispersed* themselves; they who were of one Language taking one way, and they who were of another Speech going another way. For there is no Reason to suppose, that they were divided into as many several Tongues, as they were Persons: But rather, that the several Families, (computed to be Seventy) which were afterwards to grow into several Nations or People, had each a distinct and peculiar Language given them.

Thus were they *scattered abroad upon the Face of the Earth*; which was the great thing they feared. And thus God at once both disappointed their Design, and answered his own: Which was, to Re-people the Earth more generally and speedily, than it is probable they of themselves, would otherwise have done.

This

This confounding of their Language gave name to the City, that they had begun to build: Which from thence was called *Babel*, signifying *Gen. 11. Confusion*.

Among these aspiring Builders, a forward and leading Man (no doubt) was *Nimrod*, whose Name imports a Rebel. Great Grandson he was to *Noah*, by cursed *Ham*, and a great Usurper and Tyrant; for which he was Proverbially called, *The mighty Hunter before the Lord*. (*Gen. 10. 9.*) And here he laid the Foundation of the first great Empire in the World; which at first was called the *Babylonian*, from this City *Babel*, or *Babylon*, the Metropolis and Seat of his Empire. From whence he, or some of his Posterity, going afterwards into *Assyria*, did there build the great City *Nineveh*, (which the Prophet *Jonah*, many Ages after, was sent to Prophesie against) and from thence this Monarchy was afterwards called the *Assyrian*, the first of the Four.

It was more than an Hundred years after the Flood, that this Confusion of Tongues, and disperſion of *Noah's* Family fell out. For *Peleg*, the Son of *Eber*, who was great Grandson to *Shem*, is reckoned to have been born in the Hundredth and first year after the Flood, and had his Name [*Peleg*] given him from that Division of the Earth, which in his time was parted amongst *Noah's* Posterity, *Gen. 11. 25.*

About an Hundred and Twenty years after this, was born *Terah*, who, *A. M. 1878.* himself not Faithful, (for he served other Gods, *Josh. 24. 2.*) was the Father of him that both was Faithful, and is called, *The Father of the Faithful, Abraham*, the Tenth from *Noah*, as he the Tenth from *Adam*.

Terah had three Sons, *Haran*, *Nabor* and *Abram*: For so is the right order of their Births. *Haran*, who was much elder than his Brothers, dying before his Father, left one Son, named *Lot*, and two Daughters; whereof one was named *Milcah*, and the other *Iscah*, both Married to their Uncles: *Milcah* to *Nabor*, (so says the Text, *Gen. 10. 29.*) and *Iscah* to *Abram*, as the *Jews* deliver; who will have her to be called *Sarai*, for her Beauty and Housewifry.

While *Abram* yet lived with his Father *Terah* in *Mesopotamia*, the God of Glory appeared to him, (so *Stephen* briefly relates the Matter before the Council, *Acts 7.*) and said unto him, *Get thee out of thy Countrey, and from thy Kindred, and come into the Land which I shall shew thee.* *Moses* adds, the Blessing annex to the Command, viz. *And I will make of thee a great Nation*, *Gen. 12. 2, 3.* Whereupon *Terah* understanding that God had appeared to his Son *Abram*, and commanded him to remove from thence, and probably drawn by the proposed Blessing, consented to go with him and his Wife; and taking *Lot* along with them, they departed from *Ur* in *Chaldea*, intending to travel into the Land of *Canaan*. But in their way coming to *Haran*, (which *Stephen* calls *Charran*, *Acts 7.*) they took up their Abode there, for a while: In which time *Terah* died, being Two hundred and five Years Old.

After *Terah's* Death, *Abram* being now Seventy and five years of Age, *A. M. 2083.* and mindful of God's Command, departed from *Haran*; and with *Sarai* his Wife, and his Cousin *Lot*, and all their Substance that they had gathered, and the Souls that they had gotten in *Haran*, (by which some understand the Persons they had gained over to the true Religion,) pursued their Journey, until they came into the Land of *Canaan*, which was the Countrey God had directed him to.

Being come into the Land, and having passed through some parts of *Gen. 12.* it, the Lord appeared again unto him, and made (if I may so speak) a Deed of Gift of that Land unto *Abram's* seed, long before he had seed (for *Sarai* his Wife was barren) and when it was possessed by other People: For the *Canaanite* was then in the Land, ver. 6. However

Abram, to shew his Faith and Thankfulness, worshipped the Lord (which *Gen. 12.* is signified by his building an Altar) in that place, where the Lord had appeared, and made so gracious a Promise to him.

Long he had not been in *Canaan*, e'er he was fain to pluck up his stakes, and remove his Tent again: For there arose a grievous *Famine in the Land*. This obliged him, for the Preservation of himself and his Family, to seek relief elsewhere: and *Egypt* lying near to that part of *Canaan* where he had settled, and being a fruitful Country, he determined to travel thither, and sojourn there a while.

When he was come upon the borders of *Egypt*, and had observed the difference, in point of comeliness, betwixt his own fair Wife and the *Egyptian Women*, a Fear began to enter him, that his Wife's Beauty would endanger his Safety. He concluded that so fair a Woman, so eminently excelling the Women of the place, would soon be taken notice of, and as soon be desired. And because the World was not then grown to that height of dissoluteness, as lightly to invade the Marriage bed; but *Nuptial Ties* were held too sacred to be violated; his fear suggested to his Apprehension, that if they took *Sarah* to be his Wife, they would make him away, that they might come to the Injoyment of her, without the Imputation of Adultery; a Crime reputed, in that Martial Age, more heinous than Murder.

To prevent this danger, he opened his Mind to his Wife; and laying the ground of his Fears upon her Beauty, he begg'd her to say she was his Sister, that she might not be taken for his Wife: By which means he might not only escape the apprehended danger, but also might fare the better for her sake. Here Nature shewed her utmost strength in this great good Man. The principle of self-preservation had wrought so powerfully on him, and so wholly possessed his Mind, that he seems not to have considered, or duly to have regarded his Wife's Chastity and his own Honour.

Yet was not his Fear groundless, nor was he deceived in his apprehension: For no sooner was he come into *Egypt*, but the *Egyptians* had cast a longing Eye upon his fair Wife. *Pharaoh's* Courtiers saw her, commended her to their King; and to Court she was forthwith brought. *Abram* called her Sister; the King thereupon took her into his House, and *Intreated him Well for her Sake*, bestowing great Presents upon him. But watchful Providence would not suffer the great Patriarch's Bed to be Defiled. Wherefore the Lord Plagued *Pharaoh* and his House; probably by inflicting some sudden Sickness, or bodily Infirmity upon them: Whereby both their Lust towards the Woman was restrained, and they made sensible that she was a married Wife. Wherefore *Pharaoh* calling *Abram* to him, and laying the blame upon him, for misleading him, by not telling him she was his Wife, but calling her Sister, he, in displeasure, bid him take his Wife, and be gone; commanding his Servants also to send him and his Wife away: Yet withal to take care, that nothing were detained from him, but that he should take with him all that he had.

This Accident, it is probable, occasioned *Abram* to leave *Egypt* sooner, than otherwise he would have done: For the next account of him is, that he went up out of *Egypt*, he and his Wife, and all that he had, and *Lot* with him, into the South. And being got into *Canaan* again, he travelled on to *Bethel*, to the place where he had made an Altar to the Lord, before he went into *Egypt*, and there he Worshiped God again.

Gen. 13. *Abram* was now, through the Blessing of God, grown very Rich, not in Cattel only, but in Silver and Gold also. His Cousin *Lot* also had

had Flocks, and Herds, and Tents : Which implies he had a Family, and Substance of his own, distinct from that of *Abram*. And their Families being large, and their Flocks great, they were ready to overcharge the place, and want Meat for their Cattel : Which might probably be the more scarce, partly by reason of the late Famine there, and partly also, for that the *Canaanites* and the *Perizzites* did then dwell in the Land, and it is likely would possess the more Fruitful parts of the Country. The Scarcity of Provisions and Pasturage, occasioned Strife between the Herdmen of *Abram's* Cattel, and the Herdmen of *Lot's* Cattel ; and that troubled *Abram* : Who fearing lest this Contention among the Servants, if not timely suppressed, might rise higher, to the endangering a breach of Friendship betwixt his Kinsman and him, took an opportunity to speak with his Cousin *Lot* about it, and in soft and mild Terms said unto him, *Let there be no Strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my Herdmen and thy Herdmen : For we are Brethren.* So the Antients reputed, and called those that sprang from one common Root, tho' not in a direct Line Begotten by one and the same Father. In which Respect these were Brethren, in a Natural Relation ; as, with respect to Religion, and the Worship of the true God, they were Brethren also, in a Spiritual Relation : Both which would suffer, if they should suffer Contention, especially about the low things of this World, to spring up, and get head between them, or their Dependants!

Abram therefore to prevent the worst, proposes parting, Seeing their Substance was grown so Great, that they could not with Convenience, and needful Accommodations, dwell any longer together. And, tho' himself was, in all respects, the greater and better Man ; yet, (which shews it is not beneath Greatness for a Superior to condescend to an Inferior) he gave his Cousin *Lot* the Offer, to make his Choice in what part of the Land he would Settle ; himself being content to take what the other should leave. *Lot* not minding to lose such an Advantage, having with his Eye Surveyed the Country, chose for himself all the Plain of *Jordan*, which he had observed to be every-where well-watered and very Fertile. Thus having parted by Agreement, *Lot* journies Eastward, and settles in the Plain of *Jordan*, pitching his Tent towards *Sodom* ; the Inhabitants of which place, were, in that wicked Age, some of the most Wicked.

Abram remained still in the Land of *Canaan* ; and after *Lot* was gone from him, the Lord appeared again to him, and renewed to him the Gift of that Land, to him and to his Seed for ever : But in Reverſion. Which Deed of Gift, penned (if I may so speak) by God himself, deserves, for the extraordinary Rareness of it, to be here exemplified, as it stands inrolled in the best of Records, the Holy Scriptures, thus. *Lift up now thine Eyes*, said God to *Abram*, *and look from the place where thou art, Northward, and Southward, and Eastward, and Westward, for all the Land which thou seeſt, to thee will I give it, and to thy Seed for ever. And I will make thy Seed as the Dust of the Earth : So that if a Man can number the Dust of the Earth, then shall thy Seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the Land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it : For I will give it unto thee.* *Abram* thereupon removing his Tent, went and dwelt in the Plain of *Mamre*, which is in *Hebron*, and there built an Altar unto the Lord ; which is a Periphrasis of Worshipping him.

Some time after this, fell out that memorable Battel, fought by Four Kings against Five ; the first pitched Field, of which we have any Account in Story : The Occasion of which was this.

Chedor-

A. M.
2086.

Gen. 14. *A. M.* *2090.* *Chedorlaomer*, King of *Elam*, had held Five petty Kings in a tributary Subjection to him for divers Years; of which Number the King of *Sodom* was one. At length they jointly Rebelled against him. Whereupon he, with three other Kings, who were his Allies, made War upon them, to reduce them to their former Obedience: And they, with united Forces, resolved to try it out in a pitch'd Field. Wherefore having drawn their Armies into the Vale of *Siddim*, which after the Destruction of *Sodom* was called *The Salt Sea*, they joined the Battel there. The Issue was, that the Four Kings prevailing, the Five were put to flight.

The Vale of *Siddim*, where the Battel was fought, had in it many Pits, out of which had been digged Slime (a kind of clammy Earth, called *Bitumen*, very good to make Mortar with;) and the Kings of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, in their Flight, are said to have fallen there: Whether, entangled amongst those Pits, they were overtaken and slain; or whether falling into some of those Pits, they there hid and secured themselves, till the Pursuit was over, is not exprest. We read (*ver. 17.*) that the King of *Sodom* went out to meet *Abram* very soon after, and treated with him about the Spoils; which might induce one to think, that it was the same King, and not a new one.

However, after the Field was fought, Sacking the City of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, the Victors carried away all the Goods, Provisions, and Prisoners; Amongst whom was *Abram's* Cousin *Lot*, who by this time was got into *Sodom*. We left him before, upon his parting from his Uncle, having his Tent pitch'd only towards *Sodom*; but now he was gone to dwell in *Sodom*, and with the *Sodomites* was led away Captive: So hazardous a thing it is to approach the Neighbourhood of wicked Men.

Amongst those that escaped, one came and brought the News of this Overthrow to *Abram*, who then dwelt in the Plain belonging to *Mamre* the *Amorite*; who, with his two Brothers, *Eshcol* and *Aner*, were in League with *Abram*. Whereupon *Abram*, understanding that his Cousin *Lot* was taken Captive, Mustred his Men, who were in Number Three Hundred and Eighteen, born in his own House; and having instructed them of the Justness of the Cause he went upon, namely, to redeem Righteous *Lot* and his Family, who were Worshipers of the true God, from the Thralldom they were brought into by Heathenish Tyrants, he Armed his Men, and led them forth; his Confederates, *Aner*, *Eshcol* and *Mamre* (moved either by Friendship and Alliance, or hope of Booty) accompanying him.

Then, having learnt which way the Adversaries Army had taken, he pursued them unto *Dan*; and being favoured by the Night, he divided his Forces into several Parties: Who falling suddenly on the Enemy, and charging them Valiantly on every side, put them to the Rout; and *Chedorlaomer*, and the Kings that were with him, being Slain, and the rest put to Flight, *Abram* brought back all the Goods, which had been taken in the Plunder of *Sodom*, and also his Brother *Lot* and his Goods, and all the Captives.

In his Return, he was Met and Gratulated, first by the King of *Sodom*, and then by *Melchizedek* King of *Salem*; concerning whom great Disputes have been, and yet are amongst the Learned, both who he was, and where his City *Salem* stood: Which here to enter into, is not agreeable to my present Purpose. Let it suffice, That whatsoever other Name he might have, the Holy Ghost hath thought fit to call him *Melchizedek*, which signifies *King of Righteousness*, and to declare him King of *Salem*, which signifies *Peace*. In both which he was a Type of Christ;

Christ; and to make him compleatly so, he is called also *The Priest of the most High God.*

Gen. 14.

This Melchizedeck coming forth to Visit *Abram*, in his Return from the Battel, brought him a Present of *Bread and Wine*, to refresh him and his Men upon their March; and also, both blessed *Abram*, and blessed God for the good Success he had given him. In requital of which Kindness, *Abram* made him a Present also, of the *Tenth part of the Spoils he had taken in that Expedition.*

The King of *Sodom* too, in thankful Acknowledgment of the Benefit he had received by *Abram*, offered him the Goods which had been taken from *Sodom*; desiring only that he would restore him the Prisoners. But *Abram*, saving to his Confederates their Parts of the Pillage, which by Right of War belonged to them, restored to the King of *Sodom* both the Prisoners and the Goods, having before resolved not to keep any thing of it, that it might appear he did not undertake that Enterprize to enrich himself by it.

It may be supposed, that after this Rencontre with the *Babylonians*, *Abram*, considering himself but as a Stranger in that Country, might be apprehensive, that they, to repair their Loss, sustain'd in the late Overthrow, might meditate Revenge: And that therefore the Lord to encourage him, speaking to him in a Vision, said, *Fear not Abram, I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding great Reward.*

Gen. 15.

However, *Abram*, thereby emboldened, took the Opportunity to put the Lord in mind, that tho' he had already promised to give that Land unto his Seed; yet he had not been pleased as yet to give him a Seed, to possess either that, or what else he had: But that his Servant was like to be his Heir. Whereupon the Lord was pleased to tell him, that *not his Servant, but one that should come forth out of his own Bowels, should be his Heir*: And that he should not only have an Heir of his own Body; but a numerous Off-spring, like the Stars of Heaven for number.

And because *Abram* desired some Token of Assurance, that he should inherit that Land, it pleased the Lord to make a Covenant with him, by express Promise, attended with Solemn Ceremonies, in this manner. *Take me* (said God unto him) *an Heifer of three Years old, and a She-Goat of three Years old, and a Ram of three Years old, and a Turtle-Dove, and a young Pidgeon.* *Abram* accordingly took those Creatures, and divided the Beasts (but not the Birds) in the midst, laid each Piece one against the other: And when the Fowls came down upon the Carcasses, he drove them away. And when the Sun was going down, a deep Sleep fell upon *Abram*, and with it an Horror of great Darkness; and the Lord said unto him, *Know for certain, that thy Seed shall be a Stranger in a Land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four Hundred Years. And also that Nation, which they shall serve, will I judge; and afterwards shall they come forth with great Substance. And thou shalt go to thy Fathers in Peace; thou shalt be buried in a good Old Age: But in the Fourth Generation they shall come hither again: For the Iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.* Then did the Lord cause to pass before him, between the divided Pieces of Flesh, first a *smoking Furnace* (a plain Representation of the fore Sufferings his Seed should undergo in *Egypt*;) and then a *Lamp of Fire*, a lively Emblem of their Deliverance after the 400 Years of their Servitude should be ended. The Promise of a Seed to *Abram*, is supposed to have been first made in the Seventy fifth Year of his Age, when *Sarai* his Wife was Sixty five Years old. And *Ishmael's* Birth being placed, in the Eighty sixth Year of *Abram's* Age, shews that *Sarai* waited about Ten Years after the Promise, for the Accomplishment thereof,

Gen. 15. thereof, before she brought her Maid to her Husband's Bed. But by that time being Seventy five Years old, and desparing of her own Conception, not only from her great Age, but from a Sense she had that the Lord had restrained her from Bearing, she prevailed with her Husband to accept her Handmaid *Hagar*, to be his Concubinary Wife: Pleasing her self with the Apprehension, that if her Maid should conceive by her Husband, it would be a Means of building up her, and her House, in the compleating of the Divine Promise.

Gen. 16. *Abram* thus persuaded by his Wife, takes *Hagar* to his Bed, and she quickly conceived by him. But as soon as she found her self with Child, forgetting her former, and mistaking her present Condition, she began to despise her Mistress; to whom (had she rightly understood her self) she still owed the same Respect and Subjection as before. For tho' in Concubinage, those Secondary, or Half Wives, (as one may call them) were accounted Lawful and True Wives, and their Issue reputed Legitimate, and they had a Lawful Right to the Marriage-Bed, and might justly claim the Privilege thereof, as well as the chief Wife: Yet in all other respects they were inferior to her. And as they had no Authority in the Family, nor share in Household Government: So if they had been Servants in the Family, before they came to be Concubines, they continued to be so afterwards, and in the same Subjection to their Mistress as before. See *Godwyn's Moses and Aaron, lib. 6. cap. 4.*

Sarai, not ignorant of her own Right, and resenting the Slight put upon her by her ungrateful Servant, expected (as it seems) that her Husband should have vindicated her Honour, and have reproved *Hagar*, for her disrespectful Carriage towards her Mistress. But he, either not observing it, or (his Mind being otherwise employ'd) not heeding it, *Sarai* brake forth into a sharp Expostulation about it, bluntly saying, *My Wrong be upon thee. I have given my Maid into thy Bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her Eyes: The Lord judge between me and thee.*

Abram, to let his Wife see, that he did not, nor would not uphold her Servant in any undutiful Carriage towards her, nor had any way abridged her Power over her, refers her to her own Authority, as a Mistress, saying, *Behold, thy Maid is in thy Hand, (that is, in thy Power,) do to her as it pleaseth thee.*

Sarai thereupon, taking her to Task, corrected her so severely, that *Hagar*, not brooking such sharp Dealing, ran away from her: And being an *Egyptian* born, she took the Way that led directly to her own Country.

As she thus travelled through the Wilderness, finding a Fountain of Water (in those hot and dry Countries, as desirable as scarce;) there she tarried to rest and refresh her self: And there the Angel of the Lord found her. For tho' *Hagar*, filled with the Sense of her Mistress's hard Usage of her, and from thence possessed with Fear, considered not the Condition she was in: Yet the Lord, who knew she bore along with her, tho' not the Seed to which the Promise was, yet a Seed of *Abram's*, which, for *Abram's* Sake, he could not but favour, sent his Angel to take care of her.

The Angel therefore, having found her in the Wilderness, by the Fountain of Water, in his first Address to her, put her in mind of her Relation and Duty, by calling her *Hagar, Sarai's Maid*; thereby intimating, that her having been Advanced to her Master's Bed, had not exempted her from her Service, and Subjection to her Mistress: But that she was *Sarai's* Maid still, and consequently *Sarai* was her Mistress still. Then asking her *Whence she came, and whither she would*

go; and the telling him, *She fled from the face of her Mistress Sarai*: The Angel did not enter into the Merit of the Cause, between her Mistress and her, or inquire the Reason of her leaving her Service; but said, *Return to thy Mistress and Submit thy self under her hands*. But because this would be likely to go down hardly with her, he softens it by telling her, that the Lord would *Multiply her Seed exceedingly, so that it should not be numbred for Multitude*. And to convince her, that he was an Angel, sent by the Lord to take care of her, he tells her that which no Man could have told her, viz. that *she was with Child, and should bear a Son*; whom he bid her Name *Ishmael*, because God had heard her Affliction.

Hagar, tho' an Egyptian, yet having been long in Abram's Family, Gen. 17. may be supposed to have been instructed in the Knowledge, and Fear of the true God. For acknowledging that it was the Lord who had thus Visited her, she called his Name, *Thou God see'st me*. The Well also, or Fountain, by which the Angel found her, was called *Beer-lahai-roi*, which signifies, *The Well of him that Liveth and seeth me*.

Hagar, thus Divinely both comforted and counselled, returned unto her Service again, and being upon her Submission received, she in due time was brought to bed of a Son, whom, according to the Angel's Direction to her, Abram called *Ishmael*. And now was Abram Four-score and Six Years old, when *Ishmael* was born. A. M. 2094.

Thirteen Years after, when Abram was Ninety and Nine Years old, the Lord appeared again to him, and said, *I am the Almighty God; Walk before me and be thou Perfect: And I will make my Covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly*. Abram thereupon, in Humble Reverence falling on his face, God talked further with him; and telling him he should be a *Father of many Nations*, changed his Name from Abram to Abraham: Giving this Reason for it, *For a Father of many Nations have I made thee*. His former Name, Abram, imported, *An high Father*; but his new Name, Abraham, signifies, *a Father of a great Multitude*: As indeed he was; not only of the Twelve Tribes, but the *Ishmaelites*, the *Edomites*, and all the Posterity of *Keturah*, coming of him. A. M. 2107.

At this time did the Lord institute *Circumcision* (a Seal of the Covenant he had now made with Abraham) commanding that every Man-child, of eight Days old, whether born in the House, or bought with Money, should be Circumcised in the Fore-skin of his Flesh (a Type of the Spiritual Circumcision, made without Hands, whereby the inordinate Desires, Affections and Passions of the carnal Mind, are pared off) upon Pain of being cut off from his People. Whereupon Abraham himself was Circumcised, being then Ninety Years old and Nine; and *Ishmael* his Son was Circumcised also; being thirteen Years of Age: And All the Men of Abraham's Household were Circumcised the same Day.

Now also did the Lord change Abraham's Wife's Name from Sarai to Sarah; the Difference in Sound little, in Sense is great: For Sarai signified, *My Princess*, Princess of my Family only; but Sarah signifies *A Princess* indefinitely, and at large, *A Princess of many Nations*. *Kings of People shall be of her*, v. 16. And now at the Changing of their Names, did God Promise a Son to Abraham by his Wife Sarah. *I will bless her* (said he) *and give thee a Son also of her*, v. 16.

Tho' Abraham did greatly rejoyce at this Promise; yet the natural Affection he bare to *Ishmael*, as being his *First-begotten*, made him break forth in desire to God, *O that Ishmael might live before thee!* But God, who as he knew what was best, so had before determined what to do,

to take off *Abraham's* too strong desire of advancing *Ishmael* to a share in the Covenant, answered him, *Sarah thy Wife shall bear thee a Son indeed, whose Name thou shalt call Isaac, and I will establish my Covenant with him for an everlasting Covenant, and with his Seed after him, ver. 19.* And that he might not seem wholly to reject *Abraham's* Request for *Ishmael*, he added, *As for Ishmael, I have so far heard thee, that behold I have blessed him, and will make him Fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly, so that he shall beget Twelve Princes, and I will make him a great Nation.*

Gen. 18. Not long after this, as *Abraham* sat, in the Heat of the Day, in his Tent-Door for Coolness, he looked up and saw *three*, whom at first he took to be *Men*, coming towards him; whereupon he hastened to meet them, and having saluted them, (according to the Ceremonious manner of those Times and Countries, which was, by bowing himself towards the Ground) he very courteously, and hospitably entreated them to stay, and to take a short Repast with him. Which they consenting to, he forthwith gave Order for some Provisions to be quickly made ready, and set before them; himself standing by, and waiting on them, under the Covert of a shady Tree, while they (as he thought) did eat. Mean while asking him where his Wife was; and being answered, she was in the Tent: One of them said unto him, *I will certainly return unto thee; according to the Time of Life*, (that is, according to the time that Women usually go with Child,) *and lo, Sarah thy Wife shall have a Son.* By this *Abraham* knew, that these Guests of his were not Men, but Angels; one of which represented the Lord himself.

Sarah standing behind, out of sight, within the Tent-Door, heard what was said concerning her; and considering that her Husband was an Hundred Years old, and she Ninety, and that according to the course of Nature, she was past Child-bearing, could not refrain from laughing: For which she was reproved by the Lord; who upon her laughing (tho' it was not outward, but *within her self*) said to *Abraham*, *Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I who am old, certainly bear a Child?*

This made *Sarah* afraid; and tho' she knew her self guilty, yet thinking to carry it off, because her Laughter was not outwardly visible, she boldly *denied that she had laughed*: But the Lord fixed it more positively upon her, saying, *Nay, but thou didst laugh.* And her being thus reproved by the Lord, shewed, that her Laughter proceeded from *Incredulity*: Whereas *Abraham*, when the Promise of a Son by her was before made to him, (*ch. 17. 17.*) *Laughing for Joy*, was not reproved.

After this the Men (for so the Text still calls them) departing from thence, and directing their Course towards *Sodom*, *Abraham* went with them, to bring them on the Way. And as they walked together, it pleased the Lord, (who elsewhere vouchsafed to call *Abraham his Friend*, *Isa. 41. 8.*) to give a singular Instance of a *particular Friendship* to *Abraham*, in acquainting him with his purpose, concerning *Sodom*, as if he would advise with him upon it. And it is observable, that the Lord grounds this Act of his Friendship very much upon the knowledge he had, that *Abraham* would command, not his Children only, but his Household after him; So that they should keep the way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment, (or Justice in Judgment:) Of which God himself gives here the third great Example. He, who knew all without Inquiry, is here a Pattern to them who cannot know but by Inquiry, not to condemn even the most Flagitious, without due Examination and Tryal. Before the Flood, God proceeded against the Old World, upon Ocular Evidence:

Evidence: God saw that the Wickedness of Man was great. Gen. 6. 5. and 12. So also at the building of Babel, it is said, The Lord came down to see the City and the Tower, which the Children of Men builded, Gen. 11. 5. And now again, before the Destruction of Sodom; tho' the Cry against Sodom and Gomorrah was great, because of the grievousness of their Sin; yet the Lord would not proceed against them, upon Generals, nor upon common Fame: But I will go down, said the Lord; and see, whether they have done altogether according to the Cry of it; and if not, I will know. Gen. 18.

This great Condescension of the Lord's, to communicate his Purpose with Abraham, gave Abraham both Opportunity and Encouragement, to interceed with the Lord on behalf of Sodom; grounding his Request on the Rectitude of God, which would not permit him to destroy the Righteous with the Wicked: And taking for granted, (as well he might) that the Judge of all the Earth must needs do right; he proceeded to mediate for Sodom, in Six petitionary Propositions, falling gradually from Fifty to Forty five, to Forty, to Thirty, to Twenty, and at last to Ten Righteous Persons: For the sake of which little Number, the Lord was graciously pleased, at his Intreaty, to grant, that if but Ten Righteous should be found in Sodom, it should not be destroyed.

While Abraham was thus pleading with the Lord; his other two Guests, who had come along with them from Abraham's Tent (and who were indeed ministring Angels, appointed to execute God's Righteous Judgment upon the Wicked Sodomites) held on their Course towards the City; whither by the Evening they came: And Lot, who sat in the Gate of the City, probably with Intention to receive, and entertain Travelling Strangers, (Publick Inns, or Victualling-Houses, being, in those early times, little, or not at all, used or known) seeing them, rose up to meet them; and having saluted them, invited them to his House, desiring them to take a Bed with him for that Night; which they at first declined; but by his Importunity (as afterwards Samuel by Saul's, 1 Sam. 15. 26, 31. and even our Lord himself, by his two Disciples, Luke 24. 28, 29.) were prevailed on to accept.

But between Supper and Bed-time, the Men of Sodom, both old and young, gathering together, as with one Consent, from every Quarter of the City, surrounded the House, and commanded Lot to bring forth his Guests to them, that they might know them, that is, abuse them in that unnatural and filthy manner, which was afterwards expressly forbidden in the Law, Levit. 18. 22. and thereby made Capital, ch. 20. 13. Which vile Sin continued among the Gentiles, even to the Apostles times, as may be gathered from Rom. 1. 27. and 1 Cor. 6. 9.) was so generally practised amongst the People of Sodom, that from thence it took the Name Sodomy; and the Practisers thereof are called Sodomites, both in Holy Scripture, (Deut. 23. 17. 1 Kin. 14. 24. and 15. 12. 2 Kin. 23. 7.) and in our English Laws, (which as did the Law of God of old,) do yet make the Punishment Death.

Good Lot, thinking by gentle Reasonings to appease his unreasonable Neighbours, steps out amongst them: and shutting the Door after him, intreats them not to offer any Violence to his Guests, who, upon his Invitation, came under his Roof for Protection. And so great was his Concern for their Safety, that he made an unwary, and unwarrantable Offer to the Sodomites, to bring out his two Virgin Daughters to them, for them to use at their Pleasure: rather than they should offer any abuse to his Guests: So Sacred amongst good Men, were the Laws of Hospitality then held. Gen. 19.

But the Sodomites, naturally Wicked, and in order to their Destruction, judiciously now hardened, disdaining to be directed by him, who was but a Sojourner, and lately come amongst them, threatned to deal worse with him, than with his Guests: And pressing hard upon Lot, *came near, to break the Door.* Which when his Angel-Guests saw, they *Smote the Men which were at the Door, both great and small, with Blindness; so that they could not find the Door,* but wearied themselves with groping after it: And having pulled Lot into the House to them, and shut the Door again, they inquired of him what Family he had; and letting him know that the Destruction of that Place was now determined, and that God had sent them to destroy it, they bid him take all his Family and Relations, with whatsoever he had in that Place, and bring them out.

Lot's two Daughters, tho' they had never lain with Men, (*ver. 8.*) yet it seems were Married: For it is said, (*ver. 14.*) *Lot went out, and spake unto his Sons in Law, that Married his Daughters;* some Translators render it, which were to Marry his Daughters. It is probable they were contracted, or *Betrothed* to Husbands: But the Marriage not consummated by Co-habitation. However, when Lot, having found out those Sons in Law of his, bid them *up, and get out of the City; for the Lord would destroy it:* They thought he did but jest with them, and so regarded not his Words.

By this time the Night was pretty far spent; and as soon as Day began to break, the Angels hastened Lot to be gone: Saying, *Arise, take thy Wife, and thy two Daughters, which are here,* (without looking after, or staying for any body else;) *lest thou be consumed in the Iniquity of the City,* (that is, in the Punishment inflicted on the City for Iniquity.) But Lot was apt to make Delays. Then while he lingered, the Angels took him, with his Wife and two Daughters by their Hands, and (the Lord being merciful to him) they brought him forth; and having set him safe without the City, bid him escape for his Life; charging him not to look behind him, nor make any stop in the Plain; but escape to the Mountain, lest he were consumed.

But Lot, observing that the Mountain was a great way off, and considering both the Labour and Difficulties, that would attend his fleeing thither, and the Dangers he might fall into by the way, intreated the Angel that he might be excused from fleeing to the Mountain, and be permitted to go to a little City hard by, which was then called *Bela*, being the Seat of one of those Five Kings, who fought the first Battel with the Four Kings, and were beaten in the Vale of *Siddim*, *Gen. 14. 8.* This Request of his was granted; that City being saved for his Sake, and he bid to hasten thither: For (said the Angel) *I cannot do any thing* (that is, towards the Destruction of Sodom, and the rest of the Cities) *till thou be come thither.* Therefore that City was spared, when the rest were overthrown, and was thence forwards called *Zoar*.

Before Lot could reach *Zoar*, his Wife, either forgetting, or not duly regarding the Charge which the Angel had given (*v. 17.*) not to look behind, or backward, (which, tho' spoken directly to Lot, extended to them all) *looked back from behind him,* and *she became a Pillar of Salt.* A Pillar, for a standing and lasting Monument: Of Salt, to season and caution others, against hankering after any thing which God hath determined, and declared he will destroy.

By that time Lot was got into *Zoar*, the Sun was risen; and forthwith the Lord rained upon Sodom, and upon Gomorrah, Brimstone and Fire from the Lord out of Heaven: Whereby he overthrew those Cities, and all the Plain, with all the Inhabitants of the Cities, and all that grew upon the Ground.

Great,

Great, and very singular, was the Kindness and Favour of God to Lot, in taking such especial Care for his Deliverance and Safety. Yet that it may not all be placed to the Accompt of Lot himself, we must remember, that Lot was very near of Kin to Abraham, and very well beloved by him; and no doubt, Lot sped the better for Abraham's sake. For it is said (*ver. 29.*) *When God destroyed the Cities of the Plain, he remembered Abraham, and sent out Lot out of the midst of the Overthrow, &c.*

Gen. 19.
A. M.
2107.

But above all, the Justice of God is herein to be regarded; which would not destroy the Righteous with the Wicked. But as his Mercy would have prevailed with him to have spared Sodom, for the sake of but Ten Righteous Souls, if he could have found Ten such in it: So, if he found but One Righteous Soul there, his Justice would not yield, that one should be destroyed with the Wicked, and for their sakes. For Abraham's Argument was right and forcible, when he said, (*To slay the Righteous with the Wicked; and that the Righteous should be as the Wicked* (or fare no better than the Wicked:) *that be far from thee. Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?* Gen. 18. 25.

As earnest as Lot was to get into Zoar, he did not care to stay long there. After the other Cities of the Plain were destroyed, he was afraid, it seems, to dwell in Zoar. Wherefore he went and dwelt in a Cave, in the Mountains to which he was first directed, having only his two Daughters with him. And here the greatest of Mischiefs befel him. For his Daughters, having lost in Sodom their espoused Husbands, and despairing of ever having any others, (as thinking, perhaps, that all Mankind were destroyed in the late Conflagration, but their Father and themselves; at least, that no Man would ever be likely to find them out, in their Solitary Retirement in the Cave) conspired how to betray their innocent Father.

They pretended a Care, to preserve a Seed of their Father; as if they were afraid, that if they did not, Mankind would be extinct in him. But they had lived in Sodom: And it is doubtful had learned too much of the manners of that place. And if the Men they were betrothed to, were of the Breed of Sodom (which there is great reason to suppose,) it argues a Disposition in them to the Licentiousness of the Place, that would contract Marriage with such. However, having an unnatural Design upon their Father, and knowing they could never draw the good Man, to commit so great a Wickedness, so long as he retained the Use of his Understanding, they contrive to divest him of his Judicious Sense, though not of his Natural Strength or Ability.

The Eldest Daughter therefore, having represented to her Sister the Condition they were in, proposed the Expedient to her thus. *Come, said she, Let us make our Father drink Wine, and then we will lie with him; that we may preserve Seed of our Father.* Accordingly, having Sufficiently Dosed the old Man that Evening with Wine, and put him to bed, his Eldest Daughter went to bed to him: And having obtained her End of him, rose again; he not perceiving when she lay down, or when she arose: Next day she acquainted her Sister how the Project had succeeded; and advised her to deal with their Father in like manner the next Night. Accordingly, the old Man being again ensnared with Wine, the Younger Daughter went to bed to him; and her End being also answered, she rose again too, undiscovered. Thus were Lot's two Daughters with Child by their Father; and had each of them a Son from that Incestuous Congress: To each of which Sons, Lot was both Father and Grandfather. But as he was the Unwitting Instrument of their Generation; so when they were born, I do not find he took

A. M.
2108.

Gen. 19. so much notice of them, as to give them their Names: But their Mothers named them; the Elder calling her Son *Moab*, and the Younger her Son *Ben-ammi*. Both mischievous Enemies, in after times to *Israel*, especially the *Moabites*: Whose Women, in *Balack's* time, thro' the Counsel of *Balaam*, betrayed many of the *Israelites* into Idolatry and Whoredom; which brought a great Plague upon *Israel*.

What became of *Lot* afterwards, the Holy Scripture doth not inform us. But we find, that the Posterity of these two Sons of his, the *Moabites* and the *Ammonites*, were provided for by God; who helped the *Moabites* to conquer the *Emims*, and to possess their Land, and the *Ammonites* to subdue the *Zamzummims*, and succeed them in theirs: And would not suffer the People of *Israel* (when they marched through the Wilderness towards the Land of *Canaan*) to dispossess either the *Moabites*, or the *Ammonites*, nor to fight with them; as will appear in the process of the History, which now leads us back again to *Abraham*.

Gen. 20. He having abode in the Plain of *Mamre*, till he had seen the Destruction of *Sodom*, removed soon after from thence more Southwardly, and sojourned in *Gerar*, the chief City of the *Philistines*.

Here again, fearing lest he should suffer for the sake of *Sarah*, if it should be known that she was his Wife; he had recourse to his former Politick Contrivance, and by agreement between them, he called her Sister, and she him Brother.

The King of *Gerar* (whose Title was *Abimelech*, as that of the Egyptian Kings was *Pharaoh*, and that of the Roman Emperors, *Cesar*) supposing her to be no other than *Abraham's* Sister, took her to him, intending to make her his Bed-fellow. Sure she must carry her years well, who at Ninety years of age, should be desired by a King. But so it seems it was; and *Abraham*, prompted by his Fear, this second time exposed his own, and his Wife's Honour, to save his life, as he thought in danger.

But it may be supposed, that *Sarah* had by this time conceived that promised Seed, which was to be *Abraham's* Heir. Of which, as well as of *Abraham* his Friend, God had an especial Care. Wherefore the Lord having restrained *Abimelech* from touching her, did in a Dream by Night make him understand, that *Sarah* was *Abraham's* Wife, charging him on pain of Death, forthwith to restore her safely to him. *Abimelech* therefore, excusing himself to God, and expostulating the matter with *Abraham*, returned him his Wife safely again; with a Royal Present to him, and a close Check upon her, for having had no more regard to her own, and her Husbands Honour. Then, upon *Abraham's* Prayer to God, the Lord healed *Abimelech*; taking off the Disability, by which he had restrained him from touching *Sarah*; And also restored to his Wife and Women their former Fertility, which on that occasion he had before stopped.

Gen. 21. It was not long after this, e'er (the time appointed; being come) *Sarah*
A. M. was brought to bed of a Son which *Abraham* (according as God had be-
2108. fore directed, Gen. 17. 19.) called *Isaac*, (which signifies, *Laughter*,) and when he was Eight days old he Circumcised him, as God commanded, Chap. 17. 12. And now *Sarah* could laugh, not in Distrust, (as before, Chap. 18. 12.) but with hearty joy.

But what was *Sarah's* joy, was *Hagar's* sorrow. Her Son *Ishmael* was Fourteen years old, when *Isaac* was born: And no doubt she had long lived in hope, that he should have been *Abraham's* Heir, and had infused that Notion into her Son; little thinking that her old Mistress should have brought a Boy at last, to frustrate both their hopes. The Disappointment must needs be great, and probably the Resentment answerable,

swerable, which in a while brake forth. For after *Isaac* was Weaned, and grown a little up, his watchful Mother catcht *Ishmael* mocking him. *Gen. 12.* And there is reason to suppose, both that this *Mockage* had relation to his *Heirship*, *Ishmael* scorning that such a *Youngster*, in comparison of himself should take the Inheritance from him, and deriding him on that account: And that *Hagar*, *Ishmael's* Mother, did countenance him at least therein, if she had not also Tutored him to it. For she was to be cast out as well as he: Which would not have been, if she had not been faulty. And we may remember, that formerly, as soon as she found she had conceived, she despised her Mistress, *Ch. 16. 4.* which shews she was of a Topping Temper.

Sarah could by no means brook, that her Bond-woman's Boy should make Sport with her Son: Therefore she was urgent with her Husband to turn them, both Mother and Son, out of Doors; putting him in mind, that the *Bond-woman's Son* was not to be Heir with her Son *Isaac*. This was a hard pinch upon *Abraham*: For he loved his Son *Ishmael* very much. But God made it easie to him, by counselling him to answer his Wife's Request confirming what she had said, viz. That *Isaac* was to be his Heir: And yet assuring him that he would take care of *Ishmael* for his Sake, and would make a Nation of him, because he was his Seed.

Abraham thus strengthened, got up betimes next Morning; and lading *Hagar* with Provisions, (Bread, and a Bottle of Water) gave her the Boy, and sent her away.

She going into the Wilderness, which was afterwards called *Beer-sheba*, wandred to and fro there, until the Water was spent. And seeing no hopes of Relief, she concluded the Lad would die with Thirst, where fore laying him under one of the Shrubs, (a low shady Tree) she sat down her self at a little distance off, that she might not see him die. And when the Child cried, and she wept, the Angel of God called out of Heaven to her, and to comfort her, bid her not fear: For God had heard the Voice of the Lad, and would make him a great Nation. Then being directed to a Well of Water, she gave the Lad Drink, which refreshed him: And God provided for him. And they took up their Abode in the Wilderness of *Paran*, where he became an Archer; by which Employment, it is probable he might get Provisions, for the Sustainance of his Mother and himself. And when he was grown to Man's Estate, his Mother being her self an *Egyptian*, took him a Wife out of the Land of *Egypt*.

A. M.
2113.

Mean while God being with *Abraham*, and visibly blessing him in all his Undertakings, *Abimelech* King of *Gerar*, being sensible thereof, took *Phichol* the General of his Host with him, and came to *Abraham*, to enter into a strict League of Friendship with him. For the King observing how greatly *Abraham* prospered, was afraid, lest in time to come, as *Abraham* should grow more Wealthy and Powerful, he might attempt something to the Prejudice of him, or his Successors in the Government. Wherefore putting him in mind of the Kindnesses he had shewed him, since he came to Sojourn in that Land, (which see in *Gen. 20. ver. 14, 15, 16.*) he desired *Abraham* to enter into a Covenant with him, that he would not deal falsely with him, nor with his Posterity: But would do unto him, and to the Land, in which he had been entertained, according to the Kindness he had received from him.

This Covenant he required him to confirm by an Oath: Which *Abraham*, at his Request did. And this being the first mention we have in Story of an Oath, or Swearing, from the Creation of Man to that time; it is hence observable, that Swearing was introduced by an Hea-then: The first that we read did ever urge an Oath, was a King of the *Philistines*.

H

The

Gen. 22. The League thus made and confirmed between them, and a little Difference composed, about a Well of Water, which *Abraham* had digged, and *Abimelech's* Servants, without their Master's Knowledge had forcibly taken from him, (which being now restored to *Abraham*, was thereupon called *Beer-sheba*, that is, *The Well of the Oath*; because there they made their Covenant, and each of them confirmed it to the other by Oath) *Abraham* made a Present to *Abimelech*, of some Sheep and Oxen; and *Abimelech* with his General, taking their leave of him, returned home.

But *Abraham* intending to settle for some time in that Country, Planted a Grove, near the Well, in *Beer-sheba*; and there called on the Name of the Lord, the Everlasting God. By which we may see how apt the Customs of the Places we live in, and of the People we converse with, are to steal, and prevail upon even good Men. By an Heathen King, *Abraham* was just before drawn to Swear: And from the Heathen's Practice he now plants a Grove, to perform his Devotions in. For that it was the Custom of the Heathen, to plant Groves, and therein to set their Idols and Altars, will appear from the Command afterwards given to *Israel*, to destroy their Altars, break their Images, and cut down their Groves, *Exod.* 34. 13. and to burn their Groves with Fire, *Deut.* 12. 3. And they were forbidden to plant any Grove themselves to perform Devotions in, *Deut.* 16. 21. But when the Kings of *Israel* departed from God, they set up Groves: And it was one of King *Ahab's* provoking Sins, that he made a Grove, *1 Kings* 16. 33. But tho' *Abraham* herein followed the Custom of the *Philistines*, amongst whom he lived: Yet the Object of his Worship was the true God; *Jehovah* the everlasting God.

A. M.
1145.

Now came *Abraham's* greatest Tryal. God, to prove his Faithfulness, commands him, to take his Son, his only Son (now that *Ishmael* was gone) his Son *Isaac* (the Son of his Joy) whom he loved so dearly; who had been conceived beyond the course of Nature, and in whom God had promised that all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed: And to offer him for a Burnt-Offering. Could any thing have been harder! But to make it easier, God sends him to do it in the Land of *Moriab*, which signifies, *The fear of God*. No place could have been more fit to bring Man's Will into a submissive Compliance with the Will of God. *Abraham* being well acquainted with the Voice of the Lord, neither disputes nor delays; but early in the Morning set forward on his Journey, accompanied only with his Son *Isaac*, and attended with Two Servants; who had an Ass to carry the Wood, and other Instruments for the Sacrifice, as well as Provisions for themselves, having three days Journey to go. For they went from the Land of the *Philistines*, about *Gerar*; and were to go into the Land of *Canaan*, to the Place where *Jerusalem* afterwards stood: For Mount *Moriab*, where he was to offer his Son, stood in *Jerusalem*, and *Solomon* built the Temple upon it, where God commanded the Offerings afterwards to be made, *2 Chron.* 3. 1.

Having travelled two Days, on the third they came within sight of the Place. Whereupon *Abraham* ordered his Servants to tarry there with the Ass, (probably to prevent any disturbance they might give him, if they should see him go to kill his Son) telling them he and his Son would go thither to worship, and come to them again. From which Words, compared with what the Apostle says of him, that he accounted God was able to raise *Isaac* up, even from the dead; *Heb.* 11. 19. may be gathered, that *Abraham* had so steady a Faith in God's Power, that though he neither knew, nor expected any other; but that *Isaac* should

should certainly have been slain: Yet he believed that God, who had so miraculously given him, and promised to make him a *Father of many Nations*, would, to make good his Promise, restore him to life again. *Gen. 22.*

Abraham therefore laid the Wood of the Burnt-Offering upon *Isaac's* Shoulder, and himself carrying the Fire and the Knife, they two went on together. Little did *Isaac* yet think what he was going about: So that, as he was herein a Type of the great Offering, it might have been now said of him, as was afterwards said of Christ; He was led as a Lamb to the Slaughter. As thus they walked together, he very innocently said to his Father, *Behold, the Fire and the Wood: But where is the Lamb for a Burnt-Offering?* To which his Father prophetically replied, *My Son, God will provide himself a Lamb for a Burnt-Offering.*

Being come at length to the Place, which God had told him of, *Abraham* built an Altar there, and having laid the Wood in order, bound *Isaac* his Son, and laid him on the Altar upon the Wood: *Isaac*, (tho' according to the manner of speaking then used, he was all along hitherto called a Lad,) is generally held to have been at that time at least Three and Thirty Years of Age, (but by this Computation, should be Seven and Thirty,) so that he was capable to have made Resistance: But he quietly submitted; whether being then at last made acquainted, by his Father, with God's Command, or from a natural Subjection, yielding implicitly to whatsoever his Father would do with him.

Now was *Abraham's* Hand stretched forth, with the Knife in it, ready to give the fatal Stroak; when the Angel of the Lord, hastily called unto him out of Heaven, and with a Reduplication of his Name, charged him not to lay his Hand upon the Lad, to do him any harm: Adding, *For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not with-held thy Son, thine only Son, from me.*

Abraham, hearing this Voice, as he apprehended, behind him, turns about; and then sees a Ram caught in a Thicket by the Horns: Which he took and offered up, for a Burnt-Offering, in the stead of his Son; and called the Place *Jehovah-Fireh*, which signifieth, *The Lord will see, or provide*, because the Lord, (as *Abraham* had foretold he would) had provided himself a Lamb for a Burnt-Offering.

Hence arose a Proverbial Speech, in Use long after. That when any one was entangled in an intricate matter, wherein he could not see his Way clear; but must rely upon Providence, he would say, *Well! In the Mount of the Lord, the Lord will provide.*

Upon this compleat Obedience of *Abraham's*, it pleased the Lord to renew his Promise to *Abraham*, with great Amplifications, and confirm it to him by Oath. Whereupon *Abraham* returning, with his Son *Isaac*, to his Servants, they travelled back together to *Beer-sheba*, the Place at that time of *Abraham's* Habitation.

How long after this he abode at *Beer-sheba*, doth not appear, but it was not long before we find him at *Kiriath-arba*, (afterwards called *Hebron*,) in the Land of *Canaan*: For there *Sarah* his Wife died, in the One Hundredth and Seven and Twentieth Year of her Age; which must be the seven and thirtieth of *Isaac's*: For she was Ninety when he was born, *Gen. 17. 17.* *Gen. 23.*

Abraham, having mourned for his Wife, addressed himself to the Sons of *Heth*, (that is) the *Hittites*, (who being descended from *Heth*, the Son of *Canaan*, and Grandson of cursed *Ham*, *Gen. 10. 6, 15.* did then possess that Region) to obtain from them a Burying-Place, to bury his Dead in. They, not understanding his Intent, with great Courtesy answered him, *In the Choice of our Sepulchres, bury thy Dead: None of us shall with-hold from thee his Sepulchre.*

This

This would not do *Abraham's* Business. He knew the Lord had called *Gen. 23.* him forth, from his Idolatrous Kindred, and from his Father's House, *Gen. 12. 1.* And had given him the *Covenant of Circumcision*, *Chap. 17. 9, 10, &c.* Whereby he had distinguished him, and his Seed, from all other People: And that therefore it was not lawful for him, to mix with any of the Nations, which did not Worship the true God, and that truly. As therefore he afterwards took especial Care, that his Son might not marry with any of the Daughters of the *Canaanites*: So, now he was wary, not to bury his Dead promiscuously amongst theirs. He proposed therefore to buy a Piece of Ground of them, for a peculiar Place of Sepulture, for him and his Family: And desired them to intreat *Ephron*, their Prince, to sell him the Cave of *Machpelah* (some little Piece of Ground that lay in the End of a Field of *Ephron's*) letting them know, he would give him for it as much as it was worth.

Ephron, it seems, tho' probably *Abraham* did not know it, was then present in the Company; and having heard *Abraham's* Proposal, very generously offered to give him, not only the Cave, but the whole Field also, that he might bury his Dead without Delay. But *Abraham*, not willing to come under such an Obligation, or to have a precarious Sepulchre, addressing himself then personally to Prince *Ephron*, intreated him to sell him a Piece of the Field, and take Money for it, and then he would bury his Dead there. *Ephron* thereupon told him, the Land was worth Four hundred Shekels of Silver: But between Persons of their Rank, he accounted that but a small matter; and therefore wisht him, not to make any more Words about it, but accept the Land, and bury his Dead there without more ado.

Supposing the Shekel here mentioned to be the common Shekel (as being used before the Law, and in a Civil, not Sacred Case) it Valued, of our English Money, one Shilling and three Pence. After which Rate, the Four Hundred Shekels would amount to five and twenty Pounds Sterling.

Abraham, having got a Price of the Field, stood not to barter, or beat down the Price; but forthwith paid the Money to *Ephron* by Weight. For in those early Ages of the World, as they had Money in Bullion unstamped, so it passed by Weight, rather than by Tale: And a Shekel had its Name from *Shakal*, which signifies to weigh, or put in the Balance, says *Godwyn*, in his *Moses and Aaron*, l. 6. c. 10.

Upon Payment of the Money, the Field of *Ephron*, and the Cave that was in it, well abutted and bounded with the Mounds and Fences, and the Trees that were therein, and all and singular the Hereditaments and Appurtenances, were firmly conveyed, and made sure to *Abraham*, and to his Heirs for ever in Fee-simple. And then, and not till then, did *Abraham* bury his Wife there.

Gen. 24. About three Years after this, *Abraham* being an Hundred and Forty
A. M. Years old, was desirous to see his Son *Isaac* (who was now forty Years
2148. of Age) Married, and settled in the World, before himself died. Wherefore calling his eldest Servant to him, who was the Steward over his House and whole Estate; he gave him a strict Charge, that he should not take a Wife for his Son *Isaac* of the Daughters of the *Canaanites*; but should go into his [*Abraham's*] own Country; and from thence bring a Wife, out of his own Kindred for him. And to lay the greater Bond upon his Servant, he required him to take a solemn Oath of Fidelity to him in this Case; the Ceremony whereof was then performed, by the Servant's putting his Hand under his Master's thigh; which, with some conditional and necessary Cautions, he did.

Then

Then having received his Master's Instructions and Charge, he set forward with an handsome Retinue of Servants and Camels, befitting his Master's State, and the Business he went about; and directed his Course to *Haran*, the City of *Nabor*, in *Mesopotamia*: For *Abraham* had heard, some time before, that his Wife's Sister *Milcab*, who was Married to his Brother *Nabor*, had born him several Children, one of which, named *Bethuel*, had a Daughter named *Rebekah*, *Gen. 22. 20, &c.*

The Servant being come to *Haran*, caused his Camels to rest themselves, by a Well of Water, without the City, it being Evening time: About which time, it was usual for the Women to come forth of the City, to draw Water at that Well.

Mean time he who had been religiously brought up, and instructed by his Master *Abraham*, in the fear of God, and knew of how great a Concern the Business he went about was, had his mind retired and inwardly Exercised in Prayer to God, that the Lord, the God of his Master *Abraham*, would speed his Journey, and shew kindness to his Master *Abraham*, in giving him good success. And being fearful lest in a matter of so great Moment, he should mistake the Person; and so not make a right Choice of a Wife for his Young Master: He humbly besought the Lord, to direct him by this sign. That when the City Damsels should come out to draw Water, she of them all, who, upon his requesting her to let him drink out of her Pitcher, should offer him to drink, and should say, I will give thy Camels drink also, the same should be she, whom the Lord had prepared, and appointed for his servant *Isaac*.

Scarce had he finished this inward Request to the Lord (for inward it seems it was, *ver. 45.*) when behold *Rebekah*, *Bethuel's* fair Daughter came forth, with her Pitcher, or Water-Tankard, on her Shoulder, to fetch Water.

Great, surely, was the Simplicity, and Humility of those early Ages, when Persons of the Upper Rank, and of the Female Sex too, did not disdain to be employed in such low, but necessary Offices. Thus, in the following Age, *Jacob* found his Cousin *Rachel* following, and watering her Father *Laban's* Sheep. And some Ages after that, the seven Daughters of *Jethro*, who was a Prince, as well as Priest of *Midian*, kept their Father's Flock, and used to draw Water, and fill the Troughs to water the Flocks in.

Tho' *Abraham* was a mighty Prince (so the Sons of *Heth* acknowledged, *Gen. 23. 8.*) yet his Steward did not think *Rebekah* ever a whit the unfitter to make a Wife for his Master's Son and Heir, for her coming with her Pitcher on her shoulder, to draw and carry Water.

Rebekah was a chaste Virgin, and very beautiful, and *Abraham's* Servant had soon his Eye upon her, and diligently watched her Motion. And when, having been down at the Well, she had filled her Pitcher, and was come up again, he ran to meet her, and said, Let me I pray thee drink a little Water out of thy Pitcher. She readily answered, Drink my Lord: and nimbly letting her Pitcher down upon her Hand, gave him drink; and withal told him, she would draw Water for his Camels also. Which he (that he might be fully confirmed by the sign he had desired) not refusing, she went to the Well again, and drew for all his Camels.

Mean while the Man, attentively considering her, said nothing, but weighed the Matter, to see whether she had fully answered the sign he had desired. And being satisfied that the Lord had thus far prospered his Journey; so soon as the Camels had done drinking, he presented her with a Jewel for her Head, and a pair of Bracelets for her Hands, of Ten Shekels weight of Gold: Which at Fifteen shillings the Shekel, would amount to seven Pounds ten Shillings Sterling.

He asked her also whose Daughter she was; and whether there were
 Gen. 24. Room in her Father's House for him, and his Company to lodge in. She told him she was the Daughter of *Bethuel*, the Son of *Nabor* by *Milcah*: And withal assured him, that they had both Room and Accommodations for him and his Camels. He said no more to her: But being deeply affected with a sense of the goodness of the Lord, in guiding him so directly to the House of his Master's Brethren, bowed down his Head, and Worshipped the Lord, and breaking forth in praises to the Lord, said, *Blessed be the Lord God of my Master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my Master of his Mercy and his Truth.*

While he was thus Meditating on the Kindness of the Lord, the Damsel ran home, and told her Relations what she had met with. She had a Brother named *Laban*; who took the care of his Father's business. He, when he had seen the *Bracelets* on his Sister's Hands, and heard from her the Account of what the Man had said to her, immediately ran down to the Well; and Saluting the Man, in the Stile of *Thou Blessed of the Lord*, (an usual Form of Salutation, in those times, to such as they designed to shew more than ordinary respect to) invited him in, telling him, there was *preparation made* for him and his Camels. The Man thereupon went in; and after his Camels had been taken care of, and Water brought for him, and his Men to wash their Feet, Supper being got ready, he was invited to eat. But he, intent on the Business he came about, said, *I will not eat, until I have told mine Errand.* Thereby giving a good Example of Faithfulness and Diligence in a Servant. Whereupon being bid speak on, he said,

I am Abraham's Servant; and the Lord hath blessed my Master greatly, and he is become great. (Then having given a general account of his Master's Estate, he added;) *And Sarah my Master's Wife, bare a Son to my Master, when she was Old; unto whom he hath given all that he hath. And my Master, said he, made me swear, that I should not take a Wife to his Son of the Daughters of the Canaanites: But should go unto his Father's House, and to his Kindred, and take a Wife unto his Son.* Then going on, he related to them the whole Process of his Journey, the Manner of his meeting with *Rebekah*, and the Divine Guidance he had therein; concluding thus, *And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my Master, tell me; and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left;* Meaning, that they should not hold him in hand; but let him know their Minds, whether they would bestow *Rebekah* on his Master's Son, or not: That if not, he might seek elsewhere.

Bethuel is supposed either to have been *Superannuated*; or to labour under some *bodily Infirmary*, which rendred him less capable of managing the Affairs of his Family; which may somewhat excuse his Son *Laban's* forwardness: For it is said, *Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the Lord; we cannot say any thing to it. Ask Rebekah her self: If she consent, take her, and let her be thy Master's Son's Wife.*

In this we have a two-fold Example: One for Wooers; the other for Parents. That which relates to Wooers, is, To ask, and obtain the Consent of Parents, or other near Relations, *first*; before they propose the matter to the Woman her self. That which relates to Parents, is, Not to *compel* a Child to Match, either by Threats, or importunate Perswasion: But having fairly opened the Case, leave to the Child a free Liberty to Consent or not, as Affection and Judgment, which ought to go together, shall incline.

No sooner had the Servant received *Bethuel's* Answer, but forthwith he makes his Acknowledgment, in a return of Thanks to the Lord. *Gen. 24.* Then making his Presents, (Jewels of Silver, and Jewels of Gold, and Raiment) to *Rebekah*, with other precious things to her Brother and Mother; they went all to Supper, and then to Bed.

Next Morning, as soon as they were up, he desires them to dispatch him back to his Master. The Brother and Mother urge delay, (no mention of the Father, either here, or with the Presents: Which confirms the Supposition, that he did not concern himself in Business; but had turned all over to his Wife and Son.) They were loath to part with *Rebekah* so soon: would have her tarry with them a while: But he, (like a Faithful and Diligent Servant) was for hastening home with her. *Hinder me not, said he, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way: Send me away, that I may go to my Master.*

Thereupon they refer the matter to *Rebekah* herself. *We will call the Damsel*, said they, *and inquire at her Mouth.* She, being called and asked, *Wilt thou go with this Man?* Readily answered, *I will go.* Wherein she is not to be taxed with *Immodesty*, or *Over-forwardness*; Since there is no ground to doubt but she, as well as her Relations, had a Sense that *the thing was of the Lord.*

The Scale thus turned for going, by her Consent, they send her away with *Abraham's* Servant, having her Nurse (whose Name was *Deborah*, *Gen. 23. 6.*) and Servant Maids to attend her. But they parted not until they had blessed her; praying that *she might be Fruitful, and that her Offspring might have Dominion over their Enemies.*

It so fell out, or rather was ordered by Providence, that *Isaac*, walking out in the Evening, to meditate on the Works and Goodness of the Lord, saw his Servants, with the Camels coming: Whereupon he went on to meet them. And *Rebekah* having espied him at some distance and asked the Steward who he was; being informed that it was his Master; alighted from the Camel, on which she rode, and covered her self with a Vail: Which according to the Custom of those Countries, was a Token of Subjection, which she thereby declared, she was willing to come under to him; and it may pass for a Periphrasis of being a Wife. *Isaac* receiving *Rebekah*, brought her into his Mother *Sarah's* Tent, who had now been Dead about three years: And afterwards he took her to be his Wife; and loved her so well, that his Love to her wrought off the Grief he had conceived for the Death of his Mother.

Abraham had another Wife, whose Name was *Keturah*: But whether he married her in *Sarah's* Life-time, or after, is a Question. *Broughton* says, after *Sarah's* Death, *Abraham* married *Keturah*. But in as much as she is expressly called his Concubine, (*1 Chron. 1. 32.*) A term not usually given to such Second Wives as succeed others; but to such as in the Life-time of the First, or former Wife, are made Partakers of the Marriage-bed: And considering also, that *Abraham*, who was an Hundred and Thirty Seven years of Age, when his Wife *Sarah* died, had no less than Six Children by *Keturah*; it gives occasion for others to suppose, that he married her in *Sarah's* Life-time.

But whensoever he married her, the Sons which *Abraham* had by *Keturah* he gave Portions to, in his own Life-time, and sent them away Eastward, into the East-Country; which it is probable he did, that they might not stand in *Isaac's* way, nor settle in any part of the Land of *Canaan*, which his Seed by *Isaac* was to inherit: That so *Israel* might not be under any Necessity of dispossessing them, when in after Times they should come to take Possession of the Promised Land.

Gen. 25. All this while *Isaac*, tho' he had been married almost Twenty Years, had no Issue by his fair Wife. Wherefore he intreated the Lord for her, because she was Barren: And the Lord was intreated of him, and *Rebekah* Conceived. But when she felt the Children struggling together within her, (for she had Twins) it somewhat startled her, and made her wonder what the meaning of it might be. Wherefore *she went to enquire of the Lord*; which in those Times was usually done by consulting some Prophet: And her Father-in-law, *Abraham*, being a Prophet, (so is he expressly called, by God himself, *Gen. 20. 7.*) and being then alive, it is most probable that she enquired by him. However, the Answer was, *Two Nations*, (that is, the Heads, or Fathers of Two Nations) *are in thy Womb: And two manner of People shall be separated from thy Bowels. The one of these People shall be stronger than the other: And the Elder shall serve the Younger.* This did not hold, of those Two Children, in their own Persons: For the Younger stood always in Fear of the Elder. But in their Posterities, it did: And it was compleated in *David's* Time, when he put Garrisons throughout all *Edom*, (*Esau* is *Edom*) *Gen. 36. 8.* and *all they of Edom became David's Servants*, *2 Sam. 8. 14.*

A. M.
2168.

At the Birth of these Two Children, the Eldest came forth *Red*, and Hairy all over like a *Hairy Garment*, and they called him *Esau*. His Brother followed him so close at the Heels, that he took hold of his Heel with his Hand; and he was called *Jacob*. This was twenty years after *Isaac's* Marriage, and in the Sixtieth year of his Age.

As they grew up, *Esau* spent his Time much in the Fields; adding himself to *Hunting*: And because he furnished his Father with Venison, (a sort of Food he much delighted in) his Father loved him best. But *Jacob* was a plain Man, dwelling in Tents (that is, minding the Family-business at home;) and being by that means more conversant with his Mother, and ready at hand to wait upon her, she loved him best.

A. M.
2183.

By that time the Boys were about fifteen years of Age; their Grandfather *Abraham* gave up the Ghost, being an Hundred Seventy and five years old; and was buried by his two Sons, *Isaac* and *Ishmael*, in the Cave of *Machpelah*, in the Field which he had purchased of the Sons of *Heth*, and where he had buried *Sarah* his Wife, about Forty years before.

Ishmael, *Abraham's* eldest Son, (tho' not his Heir) lived many years after this, till he had attained to be an Hundred and seven and thirty years old. And then leaving (as was predicted of him, *Gen. 17. 20.*) Twelve Sons, who were all Princes of Nations, possessors of Towns and Castles; he also gave up the Ghost. And altho' he had been such a wild Man, that his Hand had been against every Man, and every Man's Hand against him, *Gen. 16. 12.* Yet he died at last in the Presence of his Brethren; that is, a natural Death, (or as we use to say, in his Bed,) having his Family and Relations about him.

A. M.
2188.

But before that, *Isaac's* two Sons, *Esau* and *Jacob*, were grown up to Man's Estate. And *Esau* one Day, having spent his Spirits and Strength in Hunting, came faint from the Field, just as *Jacob* had sold some Pottage of Lentiles, (a kind of Pulse, somewhat like our Vetches, or courtest sort of Pease;) and it was of a Red Colour. *Esau* soon had his eager Eye upon the Broth; and being greedy through Hunger, desired his Brother to feed him with that Red, Red; not knowing what else to call it, and doubling the Word through eagerness and haste, (which gave him the Nick-name *Edom*, signifying not only *Earthy*, but *Blood-red*;) and as a Motive to perswade him, he told him he was faint.

Jacob,

Jacob, plain tho' he was, knew this was the time to get a good Bargain; and therefore intending to work his own *Advantage*, from his Brother's *Necessity*, asked him forthwith to *sell him his Birth-right*. Gen. 25.

The Birth-right, or Right of Primogeniture, had many and great Privileges annexed to it. The first-born was *Consecrated to the Lord*, Exod. 22. 29. was *next in Honour and Dignity to the Parents*, Gen. 49. 3. Had a *double Portion* allotted to him, Deut. 21. 17. and *succeeded in the Government* of the Family or Kingdom, 2 Chron. 21. 3. and therefore was a Matter of the highest regard.

Esau, either not considering, or not duly regarding any of these; but consulting his own present need and Appetite only, Slightly answered, *Behold, I am ready to die, and what good shall this Birth-right do to me?*

Jacob finding him so *indifferent* and *coming*, was willing to *bind the Bargain*, and make sure of it; and therefore presently urged him to confirm the Birth-right to him by an Oath. *Esau* as readily consenting, Sold his *Birth-right*, with all those excellent Privileges that depended on it, to his Brother *Jacob*, for a *Mess of Pottage*. And this in *Esau* is called *Despising his Birth-right*.

After this, there was a *Famine* in that part of the Land where *Isaac* Gen. 26. lived: Which made him think of Removing. And while he deliberated whither to go, or where to settle, whether in *Egypt*, or among the *Philistines*; the Lord appeared to him, and charged him not to go down into *Egypt*, but to sojourn in that Land where he should direct him: Promising to be with him, and bless him, and assuring him that he would give all those Countries to him and his Seed, in performance of the Oath which he had sworn unto *Abraham* his Father; and that he would cause his Seed to Multiply as the Stars of Heaven, and all Nations to account themselves blessed therein, because of the Faith and Obedience of *Abraham*.

Isaac therefore, by divine Direction, went to *Abimelech* King of the *Philistines*, and dwelt as his Father had formerly done, at *Gerar*. And here the same Temptation attended him, that attended his Father in the same place before.

Rebekah was very beautiful, and *Isaac* was afraid the *Philistines* would kill him, that they might enjoy her. He therefore, when they asked him what she was to him, not daring to own her for his Wife, told them she was his Sister; which was then a common Appellation amongst Kindred, in almost any degree. But as Watchful Providence prevented her being then taken from him: So some time after, the King himself, looking out at a Window, observed *Isaac* behaving himself so familiarly towards *Rebekah*, as gave him ground to suspect she was his Wife; not his Sister only. Wherefore calling *Isaac* to him, he confidently told him she was certainly his Wife. Which *Isaac* not knowing how to deny; the King first blamed him, for laying such a snare before his People (saying, *What is this thou hast done? One of the People might have chanced to have lain with thy Wife, and thou shouldest have brought Guiltiness upon us* :) And then gave a charge, on pain of death, to all his People, that none of them should harm him, or his Wife.

Isaac, by this Protection encouraged to tarry there longer, applied himself to Husbandry; and having Sowed some Land in that Countrey, reaped a Crop, the same year, of an Hundred-fold. By which, and the Lord's continual Blessing him, he increased to that degree of Wealth and Greatness; being possessed of Flocks and of Herds, and having great store of Servants, that the *Philistines* began to envy him; and their King desired him to remove from them; for (said he) *thou art much mightier than we*.

Gen. 26. Isaac thereupon departed from thence; and the rather, for that the *Philistines*, to make his stay uneasy to him, had *stopped up all the Wells*, which his Father's Servants had digged in the time of his Father's abode there formerly, and had *filled them with Earth*. Wherefore removing into the Valley of *Gerar*, he pitched his Tent, and dwelt there. But before he went, he *opened again the Wells of Water*, that had been digged in his Father's time, and *which the Philistines had stopped up* after his Father's death; calling them by the Names which his Father had given them.

Being thus settled in the Valley, his Servants digged a Well there, and found a *Spring of Water that continually flowed*. But when the Herdsmen of *Gerar* knew of it, they claimed the Well, pretending it was theirs: And tho' Isaac's Servant's had both found it, and digged it, yet these Herdsmen strove with them for it. Wherefore Isaac called that Well *Esec*; which signifies *Contention*: And being a Peaceable Man, willing to live quietly, he let that Well go; and ordered his Servants to dig another. They did so; and when they had found Water, the Herdsmen strove for that too; whereupon he called that Well *Sitnah*, which signifies *Hatred*. From those two Names we may observe, *how apt Contention is to lead to Hatred*; and thereupon take this Caution:

*Seek Peace, and prize it; but Contention Shun:
Lest Esec do at length to Sitnah run.*

Weary of such quarrellous Neighbours, Isaac removed further from them, and then digged another Well; and because he enjoyed that without strife, he called it *Rehoboth*, which signifies *Room*: for now (said he) *the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the Land*.

Yet tarried he not long there; but went up from thence to *Beer-sheba*: Where the Lord, the same Night, appearing to him, comforted and encouraged him; and renewed his Promise to him, to bless him, and to multiply his Seed, for his Servant *Abraham's* sake.

Isaac therefore, building an Altar there, worshipped the Lord. And because he designed to make some stay there, his Servants digged a Well: for in those hot and dry Countries, Water was much wanted.

Mean while *Abimelech*, King of the *Philistines* (remembering how unkindly he had dismissed Isaac, *ver. 16.* and what *Squabbles* had afterwards happened between their Servants striving for Water; and not knowing how Isaac might resent it) thought it advisable, for preventing future dangers, to *make a Visit to Isaac*: And try if he could draw him into a *League of Amity*, and Firm Friendship. Taking therefore *Abuzzarh*, one of his Friends (to be, if need were, a Mediator between them) and *Phichol*, Captain General of his Forces, he went to Isaac at *Beer-sheba*.

Isaac, that he might shew them he was sensible of the Injuries done him (and withal, not yet knowing the intent of their coming) gave them at first but a *cold Reception*: Asking them, wherefore they came to see him, seeing they hated him, and had sent him away from them? They, not willing to have *old Sores rubbed*; Answered smoothly, *We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee; and we said, Let there be an Oath betwixt us and thee, and let us make a Covenant with thee, that thou wilt do us no hurt*; as (added they, to smooth over the matter) *We have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in Peace*; concluding with that kind and pleasing Compellation, *Thou Blessed of the Lord*.

When

When *Isaac* understood the Business they came about, He, who was of a *quiet* and *gentle* Temper, and desirous of Peace; (as having more cause to fear hurt from them, than they from him) entertained them *courteously* and *liberally*: And next Morning betimes they made a League, confirming it by mutual Oath. After which he having accommodated them for their Journey, they took their leave of him and departed.

The last we heard of *Esau*, was the selling of his Birth-right: The next we hear of him, is his grieving his godly Parents, by his ungodly Marriages. He was now Forty years of Age: And having never been good, and now, (since his flighting of his Birth-right) grown worse; tho' he could not be ignorant of the Care his Grandfather took, that his Father might not marry into an Idolatrous Family; yet nothing would serve his Turn, but to take two *Hittites*, *Judith* and *Bashemath* to be his Wives. A. M. 2206.

These *Hittites* descended from *Heth*, the Son of *Canaan*, and Grandson of Cursed *Ham*, (*Gen.* 10. 5. 16.) And *Esau* must marry these *Hittite* Women, either without the Knowledge and Consent of his Parents; which was bad: Or against their express Prohibition; which was worse. However it was, these *Hittite* Marriages were such a Grief of Mind, to *Isaac* and *Rebekah*, that it is said to be a Bitterness of Spirit unto them. And so indeed ought all such mungrel-Marriages to be to all godly Parents.

Yet see how prevalent natural Affection was with this good Man. For after this, when he was grown old, and his Sight was gone, he called his Son *Esau* to him; and putting him to consider that he was old, and his Life uncertain; wished him to take his Bow and Arrows, and go hunt some Venison, and make him a Savoury Dish thereof, such as he knew he loved, and bring it him; that he might eat thereof, and (in the Delight he should take in eating it) might give him the Blessing appendant to the Birth-right, before he died. Gen. 27. A. M. 2245.

Thus good *Isaac* overswayed, by a fond Affection to a disobedient and graceless Son, would have preferred the Order of Nature to the Divine Will of God, who had expressly declared, before the Children were born, that the Elder should serve the Younger. But God would not suffer his Purpose to be so disappointed; and therefore being unwilling to deal hardly with *Isaac*, he permitted him to be imposed upon, by his Wife and Younger Son, and thereby drawn to do that unwittingly, which to have done knowingly would have been very uneasy to him.

It so fell out, that *Rebekah* over-heard what her Husband had said to his Son *Esau*. Wherefore as soon as ever *Esau* was gone to Hunting, she called her Son *Jacob* to her; and having related to him what she heard his Father say to his Brother, she first in a general way enjoined him that he should punctually observe her Directions. Then in particular, bid him go to the Flock, and fetch from thence two good Kids of the Goats; and with them (said she) will I make Savoury Meat for thy Father, such as he loves; and thou shalt bring it to thy Father; that he may eat, and may bless thee before his Death.

Jacob had gotten the Birth-right already, and knew that the Paternal Blessing did usually attend it; but he was fearful lest, if he should attempt to get it by such indirect means, he should lose the Blessing, and get a Curse instead of it: For he considered that, his Brother being all over Hairy, and he Smooth, if his Father (to supply his Defect of Sight by Feeling) should handle him, he might easily discover him; and this he objected to his Mother. But she having continually kept in remembrance the Words of the Divine Oracle, [*The Elder shall serve the Younger*, *Gen.* 25. 23.] confidently answered him, Upon me be thy Curse,

Curse, my Son : only obey my Voice ; and without delay, Go fetch me
 Gen. 27. the Kids.

Jacob disputed no further ; but went, and brought her the Kids : With which she made *Savoury Meat*, such as she knew her Husband loved. Then dressing up *Jacob* in *Esau's* best Cloaths, (which she it seems, had the keeping of, or could come at ;) and fastening the hairy Skins of the Kids upon his Hands, and the Smooth parts of his Neck (for in those Hot Countries Men went barenecked) she put the Dish of Meat into his Hand, and so sent him with it to his Father.

As soon as *Isaac* heard his Voice, he asked, *Who art thou, my Son ?* Meaning, which of my Sons art thou ? *Jacob* answered, *I am Esau, thy first-born.* By which it is probable he meant, that he did represent *Esau*, or stood in the place of *Esau* the first-born, by vertue of the purchase he had made of the Primogeniture, or Birth-right of his Brother *Esau*.

Isaac, wondering that he had made such hast, asked him, how it came to pass, that he had found and taken the Venison so quickly ? He replied, *Because the Lord thy God brought it to me.* Meaning peradventure, that the Lord had put that Invention, or contrivance of the Kids, into his Mother's mind ; and by her had brought it to him.

Isaac, not willing to trust to his *Hearing* only, called *Jacob* to come near him ; that (saith he) I may feel thee, whether thou be my very Son *Esau* or not. *Jacob* thereupon went to him. And the poor old Man, deprived of sight, when he had felt of *Jacob's* Hands, being deceived by the hairy Kids-skins, could not ascertain himself, whether it was *Jacob*, or *Esau* : But shewed his uncertainty by saying, *the Voice is Jacob's Voice : But the hands are the hands of Esau.* Having therefore no other way to attain satisfaction, but the *Veracity* of his Son, he put the Question more close and home to him, *Art thou my very Son Esau ?* To which *Jacob* (more roundly than truly) answering, *I am :* The old Man urged no further, but taking him indeed for *Esau*, bid him bring near the Meat, that he might eat of his Venison, and his Soul might bless him.

Jacob was not backward to that ; but brought the Food near to him : Of which when he had eaten, he brought him Wine also, and he drank. After which, *Isaac* bid him come near, and kiss him. Which while *Jacob* did, his Father smelled the smell, not only of the Kids-skins, but of the Raiment he had on.

Upon smelling the Raiment, he began to pour forth his Blessing upon *Jacob* ; saying, *See, the smell of my Son is as the smell of a Field, which the Lord hath blessed. Therefore God give thee the Dew of Heaven, and the Fatness of the Earth ; and Plenty of Corn and Wine. Let People serve thee, and Nations bow down to thee. Be Lord over thy Brethren, and let thy Mother's Sons bow down to thee. Cursed be every one that curseth thee : And Blessed be he that bleisseth thee.*

Very concise are the Terms of this Blessing : But very full and extensive is the matter contained therein. And like an *Heavenly-minded* Man, he begins his Blessing with an Apprecation of *Heavenly things* ; signified by the *Dew of Heaven*. After which follows the *Fatness of the Earth*, producing *Plenty of Corn and Wine* ; under which two general Heads, are (by a *Synecdoche*) comprehended all necessary Conveniences, and Accommodations for the Being, and well-being of Human life. Then follows *Power and Dominion* : both *general* over People and Nations ; and *particular*, over his Brethren, the Sons of his Mother. Under which Expression, by an over-ruling Providence, *Isaac* was made unwittingly to confirm to *Jacob* the Birth-right, before by private Contract Transferred from *Esau* to him. Thus

Thus *Jacob* obtained the Blessing; but by such ways and means, as if they may be excused in him, or he in using them, on the account *Gen. 27.* that God had appointed the Blessing to him: Yet are they not to be imitated, or drawn into example by any other. Which they may do well to consider, who proposes the whole Scripture and every part thereof, without distinction, for a standing Rule of both Faith and Practice, to all Believers, in all times.

Scarce was *Jacob* got clear off from his Father's presence, when in came his Brother *Esau* from Hunting. Who, having caught some Venison, and dressed it, fit for his Father's Palat, brought it in with him: And little thinking what had passed between his Father and his Brother, very cheerfully said to his Father, *Let my Father arise, and eat of his Son's Venison, that thy Soul may bless me.*

This Startled *Isaac*: who thereupon hastily asked, *Who art thou?* To which *Esau* replying, *I am thy Son, the first-born, Esau*; a very great Trembling seized upon *Isaac*, and brought upon him a Perturbation of mind: So that he called out, *Who, where is he, that hath taken Venison and brought it me; and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have Blessed him?* And, being by this time sensible of a Divine ordering hand therein, he added, *Yea, and he shall be Blessed.*

At that word *Esau* roared out most bitterly. And having no hopes to prevail with his Father, to reverse the Blessing given to his Brother, he cried, *Bless me, even me also, O my Father.*

Isaac, to excuse himself to him, for having given the Blessing from him, told him, *Thy Brother came with Subtilty, and hath taken thy Blessing from thee.* Ah, said *Esau* (playing upon his Brother's Name, which signifies a Supplanter) *is he not rightly named Jacob? For he hath Supplanted me, these two times: He took away my Birth-right before; and behold now, he hath taken away my Blessing.* Thus an offended mind is apt to over-charge: For *Jacob* did not take away his Birth-right. He only asked him to sell it: And *Esau*, not regarding it, sold it him for a Trifle.

But *Esau*, applying himself again to his Father, said, *Hast thou not reserved a Blessing for me?* *Isaac* wanted not good Will to him: But he had emptied the chief of his Store upon *Jacob*. *I have made him thy Lord, (said Isaac to Esau) and all his Brethren have I given to him for Servants; and with Corn and Wine have I sustained him: And what shall I now do unto thee, my Son?* Alas! said *Esau*, *Hast thou but that one Blessing? Bless me, me also, O my Father.* And with that, he not only cried out aloud, but wept also.

Of this, long after the Author to the Hebrews took notice, *Heb. 12. 16, 17.* Where having branded *Esau* with Profaneness, in despising his Birth-right, and selling it for a Morfel of Meat; he observes that, when afterwards he would have inherited the Blessing, he was rejected: For tho' he sought it, [the Blessing,] carefully, and with Tears; yet he found no place of Repentance, in his Father. Neither Prayers nor Tears, could prevail with *Isaac*, to revoke the Blessing he had, by Divine Appointment, given to *Jacob*, *I have blessed him, said he, Yea, and he shall be blessed.*

Yet, that he might somewhat pacify *Esau*, and do as well for him as he could, he at length tells him, *His Dwelling shall be of the Fatness of the Earth, and of the Dew of Heaven from above.* In which Words, besides the inverting of the Order of the Words and Things (the Earthly [the Fatness of the Earth,] being here, to the Earthly Man, set first; whereas the Dew of Heaven was set first to *Jacob*, the Heavenly Man:) This which is said to *Esau*, looks more like a Predicti-

on of what would befall him, than an *Apprecation* that they might
 Gen. 27. befall him. To *Jacob* it was said, *God give thee of the Dew of Heaven, and the Fatness of the Earth, &c.* But to *Esau*, *Thy Dwelling-place shall be of the Fatness of the Earth, &c.* And whereas *Power and Sovereignty*, not only over *Esau* and his Posterity, but more generally over *People and Nations*, is wished to *Jacob*: *Esau* is told, that he should live by his *Sword*, (which is but an *unquiet, uneasy, unsafe Course of Life*;) and should serve his Brother; which must needs be a *Cut to him*. Only, for his *Comfort*, it is *Prophetically* added, that he in his Posterity, should at one time or other, have a *Dominion also*; and that then they should break his Brother's Yoke from off their Neck. Which was attempted, and begun in King *Joram's* Time, 2 Kings 8. 20, 22. but not compleatly and fully fulfilled, till King *Herod's* time, who was an *Edomite*.

Esau regarded not the *Birth-right*, which led to the *Blessing*: But the *Blessing* he was very earnest to have gotten. Thus some Men are desirous of attaining the End, but neglect the Means, which lead to that End.

Now when *Esau* saw, that his Brother *Jacob* had got the *Blessing* from him, he hated him for it: And supposing his Father would not live long, he resolved, that, as soon as his Father should be dead, he would slay his Brother. Of which his unnatural Purpose, *Rebekah* being inform'd, she called her Son *Jacob* to her, and having acquainted him with his Brother's Threats, wished him by any means to make a Visit to his Uncle *Laban*, at *Haran*, and tarry with him a while, until his Brother's Fury should be asswaged: Which she would observe, and then send for him home again.

Jacob, being of a mild, and probably somewhat fearful Nature, and knowing *Esau's* rough Temper; would easily comply with a Proposal tending to his own Safety: But to go without his Father's Consent would not do well; and how to get the Old Man's Consent was the Difficulty. *Rebekah* therefore, took an Opportunity, when her Husband and she were together, politickly to complain of the uneasiness she was under, on the Account of their Son *Esau's* Hittite-wives; and the Fear she had, lest his Example should lead their Son *Jacob* to do the like. I am weary of my Life, said she to her Husband, because of the Daughters of *Heth* (meaning *Esau's* Wives;) If, added she, *Jacob* should take a Wife of the Daughters of *Heth*, such as these which are of the Daughters of this Land; what good shall my Life do me?

Gen. 28. Tho' *Isaac* knew not the Ground, nor drift of this Complaint, yet being a Devout and Pious Man, and knowing that the Promise made to *Abraham*, and renewed to him, was to be fulfilled in the Seed of *Jacob*; and being therefore careful, that he should not corrupt his Seed, by mixing with any of those Nations which were to be destroyed, he forthwith called *Jacob* to him, and together with his Fatherly Blessing, gave him a strict Charge, that he should not take a Wife of the Daughters of *Canaan*; but should go to *Padan-aram*, to the House of *Bethuel*, his Mother's Father; and from thence take him a Wife of the Daughters of *Laban*, his Mother's Brother. And God Almighty, (said he, to encourage him,) Bless thee, and make thee Fruitful, and multiply thee; that thou mayst be a Multitude, (or an Assembly rather) of People; and give thee the Blessing of *Abraham*, to thee, and to thy Seed with thee; that thou mayst inherit the Land, wherein thou art a Stranger, which God gave unto *Abraham*.

Thus *Isaac* sent away *Jacob*, just as his Mother and he had desired and contrived: And away towards *Padan-aram* goes *Jacob*.

Now

Now when *Eſau* ſaw that his Father had confirmed the Bleſſing to his Brother *Jacob*, and ſent him away to *Padan-aram*, to take him a Wife from thence; and that as he bleſſed him, he charged him not to take a Wife of the Daughters of *Canaan*, and that *Jacob* in obedience to his Parents, was gone towards *Padan-aram*, Collecting from thence, that his Father was diſpleaſed with him, for having taken thoſe *Hirrite-Wives*, who were of the Daughters of *Canaan*; and thinking to Reingratiate himſelf with his Father, he went and took *Mahalath*, his Uncle *Iſhmael's* Daughter, to be his Wife, which mended the matter but little.

Jacob, now travelling towards *Padan-aram*, and being benighted on the way, was fain to lodge abroad in a certain Place; Providence ſo diſpoſing it. Wherefore lying down on the Ground, and laying his Head upon a Stone, he fell aſleep; and in his Sleep Dream'd that he ſaw a Ladder ſet upon the Earth, the Top of which reached to Heaven; and upon it were the Angels of God aſcending and deſcending. Above it ſtood the Lord, and ſaid to him, *I am the Lord God of Abraham thy Father, and the God of Isaac: The Land whereon thou lieſt, to thee will I give it, and to thy Seed. And thy Seed ſhall be as the Duſt of the Earth; and thou ſhalt ſpread abroad to the Weſt, and to the Eaſt, and to the North, and to the South: And in thee, and in thy Seed, ſhall all the Families of the Earth be bleſſed.* And to comfort and encourage him to go on in his Journey; he added, *And behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all Places where thou goeſt; and will bring thee again into this Land; For I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have ſpoken to thee of.*

Jacob, hereupon awaking out of his Sleep, and having the matter of his Dream imprinted on his Mind, ſaid, *Surely the Lord is in this Place, and I knew it not.* And this being (ſo far as appears) the firſt time that God had ſo immediately appeared to him, a Reverential Awe fell upon him; and being afraid, he brake forth into Admirati-on, ſaying, *How dreadful is this Place! This is none other but the Houſe of God; and this is the Gate of Heaven!* For tho', at firſt, he had not well enough conſidered the Omnipreſence of God; yet here he well obſerved, that where God doth vouchſafe ſo to manifeſt himſelf, *that is his Houſe.* Getting up therefore early in the Morning, he took the Stone, which he had put for his Pillow, and ſet it up for a Pillar: Both as a Monument of God's Love to him, in ſo eminently appearing, and confirming his gracious Promiſes to him; and as a Mark to know the Place by afterwards, whenever he ſhould come that way again.

Having ſet up the Stone, he poured Oyl upon the Top of it. And this being the firſt mention we have of Oyl, either as to Uſe, Thing, or Name, it ſeems more reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that he uſed it here, (and ſo afterwards, *Gen. 35. 14.*) in a way of Religious Conſecration; and that rather by a Divine Inſtinct, and ſecret Direction from God, than by Imitation or Example, from either his Father, or Grandfather; which ſome think he did. For if either *Abraham* or *Iſaac*, had uſed Oyl, in any of their Religious Performances; it may well be thought, there would have been ſome mention of it before now; whereas I find it not ſo much as named till now; nor after this, (ſave once, when *Jacob* returning from *Padan-aram*, to this Place again, poured out Oyl on a Pillar then, as he had done now) until God in the Law, appointed the uſe of it, in Conſecrations, and in Offerings, &c. Which Ceremony (ſays one) ſignified theſe two Things. One, that *Chriſt* was Anointed, and Conſecrated to his Office of Mediator, with fulneſs of
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the Holy Ghost. Secondly, that the Anointing of the Spirit, is that which makes us, and all our Service, acceptable to God. Wilson's Christian Dictionary, verbo Oyl.

Gen. 28.

The Place where *Jacob* had this Heavenly Vision, which was called *Luz* before, he now called *Beth-el*, that is, the House of God. And before he went from thence, repeating some part of what the Lord had said to him, he Vowed a Vow, the more strongly to bind himself to the Lord's Service, saying, *If God will be with me, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on; So that I come again to my Father's House in Peace: Then shall the Lord be my God. And this Stone, which I have set up for a Pillar, shall be God's House, (or, in the Place where I have set up this Pillar will I worship God:) And of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the Tenth unto thee.*

This is the second mention of Tythes or Tenths, and the First Vow concerning them; made voluntarily, and express'd in the terms of Giving them, and that not to Man, but to God. How, or when, it was performed, no Man knows; unless it were (as most think it was) by an Offering unto God, when *Jacob* built an Altar at *El-beth-el*, and set up a Pillar in the Place where God had talked with him, and poured a Drink-Offering, and Oyl thereon, at his return from *Padan-aram*, Gen. 35. 7. 14.

Jacob, having thus Performed his Devotions, and being much encouraged by the Vision he had seen in his sleep, went cheerfully on his Journey, till he came into *Mesopotamia*. And looking about, as he walked, he saw a Well in a Field, and three Flocks of Sheep lying by it: For out of that Well the Flocks were wont to be watered. And because the Mouth of the Well was covered with a great Stone; the manner was, that when all the Flocks were gathered together, the Shepherds, joyned all their strength's, rolled away the stone: And when they had watered the sheep, they put the stone in its place again upon the Mouth of the Well.

Jacob straight makes up to them; and Saluting them, with the courteous Compellation of *Brethren*, asked them whence they were? They answering, *Of Haran*; he asked them, *If they knew Laban, and how he did?* They tell him, *he was well*; and that *that was his Daughter Rachel*, who was coming towards them with the Sheep.

By that time they had done their discourse, *Rachel* was come up to them, with her Father's sheep: For she kept them. As soon as *Jacob* saw *Rachel*, he rolled the stone from the Well's Mouth, and watered her sheep for her. Which done, he told her who he was: and Saluting her with a Kiss, he lift up his voice, and wept for Joy. *Rachel*, leaving him there, hasted home, and told her Father whom she had met with. And as soon as *Laban* heard that *Jacob*, his Sister's Son, was come to see him, he ran to meet him; and having embraced, and kissed him, he brought him home with him.

Jacob soon after gave his Uncle an account of what had happened, betwixt his Brother *Esau* and him, as the cause of his coming from home; and of the Vision he had had in his sleep on the way. All which was necessary for *Laban* to understand; both to prevent any suspicion that he had mis-behaved himself at home, or left his Parents without their Consent and Direction, seeing he came so bare and unattended: And also to make him sensible, that the Lord had taken upon him the Protection and Care of him. And accordingly *Laban*, when he had heard the account he gave, acknowledging him to be his near Kinsman, gave him a kind Reception.

When

When *Jacob* had now been with his Uncle *Laban* the space of a month, and had entred himself in his Uncle's Business, as intending to make some stay with him; his Uncle, taking an opportunity to discourse with him, let him know, he did not expect, nor think it reasonable, that, because he was a near relation, he should *serve him for nothing*: And therefore desired him to tell him, what Wages he would have. Gen. 29.

Rachel was *Laban's* younger Daughter: But being *Beautiful*, and well-favoured (whereas her elder Sister, *Leah*, was *tender-eyed*;) *Jacob* was fallen in love with *Rachel*; and therefore told his Uncle, he would *serve him seven years*, for his younger Daughter, *Rachel*. To which *Laban* (as well he might) consenting, *Jacob* entred his *first Apprentiship*, or seven years Service: Which, for the great Love he bore to *Rachel*, seemed to him but a few days.

When he had served up his time, he desired his Uncle (who was now to be his Father-in-law) *to give him his Wife, that he might enjoy her*. *Laban* thereupon, that the Marriage might be *Openly Solemnized*, made a Feast, and invited his Neighbours. And being desirous, for his own advantage, to detain *Jacob* still in his service; he dealt not fairly with *Jacob*, but beguiled him; For in the Evening, he *took Leah*, and brought her to *Jacob's Bed*, in stead of *Rachel*. And it being the Custom of the Countrey, that the Bride, on pretence of Modesty and shamefacedness, should be covered with a Vail when she was brought to the Bridegroom; *Jacob*, by that means, was deceived, not discerning that it was *Leah*, till he had lain with her.

Next Morning, when he found the *Abuse*, he complained of it to *Laban*; who put it off with a *slender Excuse*, alledging, that it was not the manner of that Countrey, to give the Younger in Marriage, before the Elder. Which, if it had been true, he should have acquainted *Jacob* with it, before they had contracted.

Laban, knowing the great Affection *Jacob* bare to *Rachel*, needed not doubt but the hopes of enjoying her too, would bind him to stay longer with him; which was the thing he much desired. But he seemed to be afraid, lest *Jacob*, in *Resentment of the Injury done him*, should throw off *Leah*, and not receive her for his Wife. Wherefore in gentle terms he intreats him to *fulfill her Week*; and then (said he) *we will give thee this also, for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years*.

By *week* here, some understand a *Week of years*, or seven years: And that to fulfil her *Week*, he was to serve up the other seven years, before he should have *Rachel*. But others, with better Reason, conclude, that by fulfilling her *Week*, was intended, that he should openly acknowledge *Leah* for his Wife, by keeping the Marriage-Festival seven days together, according to the manner of those times in that Countrey: And at the end of the *Week* should Marry, and Enjoy *Rachel*; and serve the seven years for her afterwards. This appears to be the right sense of the Place, by the order of the Story. For tho' *Jacob* was with *Laban* Twenty years, (Gen. 31. 28, and 41.) Yet at the end of the Fourteenth Year, *Jacob* proposed to part, and return home. But *Rachel* had born *Joseph* before that, (Gen. 30. 25.) And besides, had been a barren Wife a good while before she bare *Joseph*: And had had two Sons by her Maid *Bilhah*, before she conceiv'd *Joseph*; which could not have been, if she had not been Married before the end of his Second seven years.

Jacob consenting to *Laban's* Proposal, fulfilled *Leah's Week*, and then Married and Bedded *Rachel*: To whom his Love went forth so much more than to *Leah*, that *Leah* comparatively was said to be hated.

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But

But the Lord pitying *Leah*, made her Fruitful; and restrained *Rachel* from bearing: So that *Leah* bare *Jacob* Four Sons; (*Reuben*, *Simeon*, *Levi*, and *Judah*) before *Rachel* had ever a one.

Gen. 30. This troubled *Rachel* sorely, so that she emulated her Sister; and being blinded, through her too earnest Desire of Children, she saw not the Hand of the Lord, in with-holding her from Conceiving; but imputed her want of Children to her Husband. And giving way to her Discontent, she vented her Passion upon him, saying unadvisedly to him, *Give me Children or I die.*

Tho' *Jacob* loved her intirely; yet here his Judgment prevailed over his Affection. And tho' he was naturally of a gentle and mild Temper; yet these Rash and Unadvised Words of *Rachel* warmed him to that Degree, that it is said, *His Anger was kindled against her*: Which he vented in this short but sharp Reproof, *Am I in God's stead, who hath with-held from thee the Fruit of the Womb?*

By this Check, brought to a better Consideration of the matter, and hopeless of Issue to match her Sister, *Rachel* bethinks her self of another way: And therefore deals with her Husband, in like manner as his Grandmother *Sarah* had dealt, in somewhat a like Case, with her Husband *Abraham*. *Laban*, when he bestowed his Daughters in Marriage, gave each of them a Maid to wait on her. *Leah's* Maid was named *Zilpah*: And *Rachel's* *Bilhah*. *Rachel* therefore (having first discoursed, and agreed the Matter with her Husband) gives him her Maid *Bilhah*, for an Under-wife, or Concubine; reckoning with her self, that what Children he should have by her Maid, should be hers: For she would account them as her own, and would take the Care of, Cherish and bring them up, as if she had been their Mother. This is meant by those Expressions [*she shall bear upon my Knees*, and, *That I may also have Children by her*, ver. 3.] And accordingly, when *Bilhah*, soon after Conceived, and bare *Jacob* a Son, *Rachel* claims him, takes him for her own, rejoices that God had given her a Son, and gives him his Name *Dan*. *Bilhah* Conceives again, and bears *Jacob* a Second Son: Which also *Rachel* takes as her own, and calls him *Naphtali*.

When *Leah* saw this, doubting her Sister would by this means get the better of her, she thought she might use her Sister's Policy; and supposing that she her self had given over Child-bearing, she gave her Husband her Maid *Zilpah* to Wife. *Zilpah* brought *Jacob* a Son; which *Leah* taking, cried, *A Troop comes*; and thereupon called the Boy *Gad*. *Zilpah* brings another Son; which *Leah*, now thinking her self happy, called *Asher*.

Her Eldest Son *Reuben*, was by this time grown big enough to run about in the Fields; where he found some pretty Flowers, that had a pleasant Smell: Which he brought home to his Mother. What sort of Flowers they were, is undeterminable. They are rendred *Mandrakes*; which is an Herb, whose Root is said to have the likeness of a Man. But some Criticks give Reasons to shew that these could not be that. Whatever they were, *Rachel* seeing them, had a great desire after them; and therefore prayed her Sister to give her some of them.

The Emulation that was between the two Rival Sisters, had so far broken their kindness to each other, that there was not a good Correspondence between them. So that *Leah*, thinking *Rachel* had too great a share in their Husband's Affection; and forgetting, or not rightly considering, that her Sister, not her self, was *Jacob's* Choice, and that she was but a kind of Interloper to her Sister, answers her somewhat churlishly, and in an upbraiding manner; *Is it a small Matter that thou hast taken my Husband* (said she to *Rachel*) *and wouldst thou take away my Son's Flowers also?* Tho'

Tho' *Rachel* could have *retorted*, and wanted not *Sharpness*: Yet having a mind to the *Flowers*, she would not then *contend*; but rather *Gen. 30.* propose *Terms of Agreement*. Whereas therefore, in course, *Jacob* was to have been *Rachel's* Bedfellow that Night; She tells her Sister, that, if she will give her some of the *Flowers*, she shall enjoy his Company that Night. *Leah* liking the *Terms* well, they agree upon it: And to make sure of him, *Leah*, went out in the Evening to meet him, at his Return from the Field; and having acquainted him with the *Terms* of their Bargain, invites him to her *Apartment*, and had his Company that Night.

Upon this, *Leah*, Conceiving again, brought forth her Fifth Son, which she Named *Issachar*, because he was *the Fruit of her Hire*. And in time Conceiving again, she had a Sixth Son, whom she Named *Zebulun*. And at last bare *Jacob* the only Daughter we read he had, whose Name was *Dinah*.

Hitherto *Rachel* had no Issue of her own Body: But now it pleased God to remember her; and he at length hearkened to her Request, and gave her a Son. Whereupon rejoycing that God had taken away her *Reproach*, (for so was *Barrenness* then accounted) and predicting that the Lord would add to her another Son, she called the Name of this Boy *Joseph*.

Soon after *Joseph* was born, *Jacob* having served up his last seven Years Service, began to think of returning into his own Countrey. Wherefore putting his Father-in-law in Mind, that the time for which he had contracted to serve, was now expired; he desired him to deliver him his Wives and Children, and send him away.

This was unpleasing Discourse to *Laban*: Wherefore acknowledging the Benefits he had received by *Jacob's* being with him, and that he was sensible the Lord had blessed him for his sake, he earnestly intreated him to tarry still with him; offering to give him whatsoever he would ask for his Wages.

Jacob, letting him know that he also was sensible, that the Lord had blessed him since his coming to him; and how greatly the *little Stock* he had before, was increased, wished him to consider, if it was not time for him, who had now a *Dozen Children*, to make some Provision for his own Family.

But *Laban*, not willing to hear of parting with him, still pressed him with, *What shall I give thee?* *Jacob*, overcome by *Laban's Importunity*, told him he should not give him any thing; But if he liked the *Terms* he should offer him, he would continue in his Service, to feed and keep his Flock still. Which *Terms* were these. That they should pass through the whole Flock, both of Sheep and Goats, and draw out all the spotted, speckled, brown and ring-straked Cattel, from those that were only white; and removing them to a convenient distance one from the other, *Laban's Sons* should take the Charge of the Spotted Flock; and he, of the White only. And then, whatsoever Spotted or Speckled Cattel, or Brown among the Sheep, or Spotted or Speckled among the Goats, should after that time come forth out of the White Flock, which he was to keep; that should be his Hire. Thus he reckoned he should depend upon Providence for his Wages; and there would be no occasion of Deference, between his Father-in-Law and him, about it.

Laban was over-joyed at the Proposition: And forthwith closing with it, they went and parted the Flocks accordingly; and delivering the Spotted Cattel to *Laban's Sons*, and the rest to *Jacob* to keep, that he might be sure there should be no intercourse between them, to cause mixtures of the Cattel, he set them *Three Days Journey asunder*.

Now

Now did God remember *Laban's unrighteous Dealing with Jacob*; *Gen. 30.* how he deceived him in his Marriage, giving him *Leah* instead of *Rachel*; and how, out of a *covetous* desire to serve himself upon him, he had contrived ways to *detain* him in his Service. Now therefore God takes from *Laban* the Riches, he had before given him for *Jacob's* Sake, and bestows it on *Jacob*; And that in such a manner, as *Laban* could neither help himself; nor justly find fault with *Jacob*.

For *Jacob* having his *Understanding opened by a divine Wisdom*, took Rods of green *Poplar*, and of the *Hazel* and *Chestnut-Trees*, and peeling off the Rind in Strakes, made the White to appear in the Rods. Then setting the Rods, which he had so peeled, in the Gutters in the Watering-Troughs; when the Flocks came to drink, and saw the Speckled Rods, they Conceived, and brought forth Cattel Ring-straked, Speckled and Spotted: All which he set before the White Cattel, that they looking upon them, might conceive such. And he took especial Care, to lay his Rods before the *Stronger* and *Lustier* Cattel; that they might conceive, and bring forth spotted ones for him: But before the *Weak* and *Feeble* Cattel he did not lay his Rods; but left them to bring forth Cattel for *Laban*. By this Artifice, not only the *greater Number* of the Cattel brought forth to *Jacob*: But his were much the *abler* and the *stronger*. And thus his Substance increased exceedingly, not in small Cattel only, but in *Camels* also and *Asses*: And he had withal a great Family of Servants.

Gen. 31. *Laban*, seeing *Jacob's Prosperity*, was not so glad of the Terms before, when *Jacob* proposed them, as he was now *uneasie* under them; and being a *Selfish* Man, not thoroughly seasoned with a Principle of Justice, he flew off from his Bargain: And had (it seems) e're this, several times altered the Terms of it; which *Jacob*, for quietness sake, suffered, tho' uneasily. But which way soever *Laban* turned it, *he still had the worst of it*. For if he said, The Speckled shall be thy Wages, then all the Cattel bare Speckled: And if he said, The Ring-straked shall be thy Hire, then all the Cattel bare Ring-straked; God so disposing it, to impoverish *Laban*, and enrich *Jacob*, whom *Laban* designed to enrich himself by.

Jacob had now been *Twenty Years* in *Laban's* Service: Whereof he served *Fourteen Years* for his Two Wives, and *Six Years* for Cattel. And now he happened to over-hear his Brothers in Law, *Laban's* Sons, grumbling, and complaining that he had taken all that was their Fathers, and had raised himself to a fair Estate out of it. He observed also, that *Laban* himself was grown *cold*, and *indifferent* towards him; and did not carry so kindly to him, as he had formerly done. This made him think of leaving *Laban's* Service, and returning to his Father *Isaac*. But then the Lord appearing to him, and bidding him *return to his Kindred, and to the Land of his Fathers*; this brought his Thought into Resolution: Only he considered, that it was necessary he should impart his Purpose first to his Wives, and draw them to a Consent; that they might not hang back, and thereby hinder his Journey. Wherefore he sent for them both to come to him in the Field; both that he might not leave his Flocks, and that he might discourse with them about it, with more *Freedom* and *Privacy*.

When they were come to him, he told them he had observed, that their Father's Countenance and Carriage was changed of late, and was not now towards him, as it had formerly been: Tho' he could appeal to their own Knowledge, both concerning his Faithfulness and Diligence in his Service; and their Father's unfair dealing with him, in deceiving him, and changing his Wages so often as he had done. He told them
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also, that God would not suffer their Father to hurt him: But had turned all his Contrivances against him to his Advantage; and had taken away their Father's Cattel, and had given them to him. And having related to them how, and for what Reason, God had done this, he then let them know, that the Lord had now lately appeared to him, and had put him in mind of the Pillar he had *anointed*, and of the Vow he had made to him at *Beth-el*, in his Passage from *Canaan* thither (of which at his first coming to *Laban*, he had given them a Relation :) and that the Lord had now commanded him, to get him out from this Land, and return to the Land of his Kindred.

Rachel and *Leah* having attentively heard what their Husband had said to them, let him know, They also had observed that their Father was *Estranged* from them, and sought to make Advantages to himself by them: And were sensible that the Lord had taken their Father's Riches from him, and given it to them, and therefore they might, without Injury to him, remove both themselves and their Substance. Wherefore assuring him that they were willing, and ready to go with him, they desired him to prepare for the Journey. *Jacob* thereupon having got all things in readiness, mounting his Wives and Children upon Camels, set forward with all his Cattel, and Goods, which he had gotten in *Padan-aram*, to go to his Father *Isaac*, in the Land of *Canaan*.

It so fell out, that at the time of their departure, *Laban* was gone to A. M. shear his Sheep; which gave *Rachel* Opportunity to steal and carry away his *Teraphim*. These *Teraphim* were Images, resembling a Man, or at least the Head of a Man, and were kept by the Heathens in their private Houses, and called their Household Gods. And these they both worshipped, and consulted as Oracles, in any doubtful Case; the unclean Spirit, to which they were appropriated, and whose Name was written on them, speaking through them, and thereby giving Answers to such as did consult them. Who list to know more of these *Teraphim*, may read *Godwyn's Moses and Aaron* l. 4. c. 9. Where he will find, that among other Reasons why *Rachel* took away those Images, one is supposed to be, that her Father, when he should hear of their departure, might not have those Images to inquire of; and so not knowing which way they had taken, might be hindered from pursuing them.

Jacob, thus slipping privily away, unawares to *Laban*, passed over the River (*Euphrates*;) with all that he had, and made for *Mount-Gilead*: Whither he got before *Laban* overtook him. For *Laban* not hearing of his Flight, till the Third Day after he was gone, was so far cast behind in the pursuit, that he was fain to travel seven days Journey, before he could overtake him. In which time God came to *Laban* in a Dream by Night, and gave him a Charge, that he should not speak roughly to *Jacob*. When therefore next morning he, with his Kindred who accompanied him, came to speak with *Jacob*, he Expulated with him (but in pretty soft and gentle Terms,) why he had Stolen away from him, and did not acquaint him with his purpose to depart; but carried away his Daughters, as if they had been Captives taken in War: Not giving him Opportunity to take a solemn leave of his Daughters and Grand-children, and to send them away with Mirth, and in an Equipage befitting his Rank. Then telling him, he had therein done foolishly (or unadvisedly) and that it was in his power (that is, he had strength enough with him) to do them hurt, he added, *But the God of your Father spake to me yester-night, and laid a Restraint upon me.*

Hitherto he seemed to blame *Jacob* for *Unkindness* only, But now *Gen. 31.* he charges him with *Dishonesty*. *If nothing would serve thee but to be gone (said he,) because thou bankerst so after thy Father's House: Yet wherefore hast thou stolen my Gods?*

To the former part of *Laban's* speech, relating to his coming away without giving him notice, *Jacob* gently answered, that he did it, because he was afraid, lest, if he had acquainted him with his purpose, he would have forcibly detained his Daughters from him. But to the other part, relating to the stealing of his Gods, *Jacob* (not knowing that *Rachel* had taken them) answered more warmly. *With whom soever thou findest thy Gods (said he) Let him not live.* And to manifest his Innocency, he bid *Laban* search all his Stuff, in the presence of their Brethren: And if he could find any thing of his amongst it, let him take it.

Laban thereupon, hoping to find his Gods, searched the Tents of *Jacob*, *Leah*, and the two Hand-maids; and not finding them there, went into *Rachel's* Tent. *Rachel* was in a double straight, with respect to both her Father and her Husband, either of which, she might well think, would have been highly offended with her, if the *Idols* should have been found in her custody: Therefore she had need set her wits on work to hide them safely. And having time to contrive, while her Father was searching the other Tents, she took the *Images*, and putting them into the *Camel's Furniture* (the Saddle on which she used to ride) she set her self down upon them. By that time she was well Settled, her Father came in to search the Tent: Whereupon she, keeping her seat, begg'd his Pardon, that she could not at that time rise up before him; alledging for her Excuse, that the Custom of Women was upon her. By which pretence he being deceived, and not removing her, to search the Saddle, though he searched all other parts of the Tent, found not the *Images*.

Jacob hereupon dealt roundly with *Laban*, asking him, what was his *Trespass*, that he had so hotly pursued after him? And so highly Charged him? And what he had found, that belonged to him, now he had searched all his Stuff? Bidding him set it forth before their Brethren, that they might judge between them. Then recounting the long *Servitude* he had held him in; his *Faithfulness*, *Care* and *Diligence* in his service; the *Hardships* he had undergone therein, both by day and by night; and the hard and unequal Terms he had held him to; he concluded thus, *Except the God of my Father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac (that God whom Isaac feared) had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty: But God hath seen mine Affliction, and the labour of my bands, and rebuked thee yester-night.*

Laban, not knowing how to defend himself against *Jacob's* Charge, thought best to let fall the Debate: And therefore calling all that *Jacob* had, (Wives, Children, Cattel, Goods) his, and pretending that, for that reason, he would not hurt them, lest therein he should hurt himself; he proposed that they should make a *Covenant of Peace* between them. Which they did, by Erecting a *Pillar*, or *Heap of Stones*, for a *Memorial* calling it the *Heap of Witness*, that neither of them should invade the other. And the *Covenant* being to be confirmed by Oath, *Laban* sware (not only by the God of *Abraham*, but, *Heathen-like*) by the Gods of *Nahor*, *Abraham's* Brother; and to go higher, by the Gods of their common Father, *Terah*. But *Jacob* sware only by the Fear of his Father *Isaac*; the God whom *Isaac* feared. This done, *Jacob*, having killed some Beasts, gave his Relations an Entertainment: And next morning early, *Laban*, kissing his Sons and his Daughters, and giving them his Fatherly Blessing, took his leave of them, and returned home.

As *Laban* went back, *Jacob* went forward: And God, to comfort him after this *Rencounter* with *Laban*, and to confirm him in an Assurance *Gen. 32.* of the Divine Protection, was graciously pleased to send his *Angels* to meet him. Which when *Jacob* saw, he said, *This is God's Host*: And thereupon he called the name of the Place *Mahanaim*, which signifies *two Hosts* or *Camps*; alluding therein to God's Host of *Angels*, and his own Company.

After this, as *Jacob* drew nearer to the Confines of the Land of *Seir*, the Countrey of *Edom*, remembring how highly he had provoked his Brother *Esau*, and in what a menacing Fury he left him (*Gen. 27.*) And that he had not, in all this time of Twenty years, received any account from his Mother, of the Abatement of his Brother's Anger towards him (which she had promised, when she found it, to send him, *ver. 45.*) he thought it advisable to send a *pacifying Message* to his Brother, that thereby he might have an opportunity to understand by the Messengers, what *Temper* he was now in, and how he stood affected towards him, before he came too near him. Choosing out therefore fit Messengers, he gave them in Charge, that when they were come to his Brother, they should say, *Thy Servant Jacob saith thus; I have sojourned with Laban, and staid there until now: And I have Oxen and Asses, Flocks, and Men-servants, and Women-servants. And I have sent to tell my Lord, that I may find grace (or favour) in thy sight.*

By this courteous and respectful Message *Jacob* hoped to appease his Brother, if any thing of his former Resentments still remained. And by giving him some account of his Substance and Attendants, he thought he might stop *Esau*, if he had not wholly lost all sense and fear of God, from attempting any thing against him, whom God had so eminently Blessed. And besides, it would look kindly and Brotherly in him, to give his Brother some knowledge of his Condition, that he might congratulate his prosperous success.

It may perhaps be inquired how *Jacob*, whom his Father, by Divine direction, had made Lord over *Esau*, could call *Esau* his Lord, and himself his Servant. *Tremellius* and *Junius*, in their Annotations on the Place, say, *By this submission, Jacob did not reject the Honour and Dominion conferred by God upon him: But patiently waiting for the Execution of God's Will, he kept himself within the Bounds of Nature, and revered Esau as his elder Brother.* But I question whether he had any other regard of the Words [*Lord and Servant,*] than as they were then customarily used amongst all sorts, especially by those, that desired to ingratiate themselves with others. As for the Term [*Lord,*] tho' *Sarah* used it (as a Title of Relation) to her Husband, thereby acknowledging his Power and her Subjection; for which she was long after both commended and recommended as a Pattern to others, *1 Pet. 3. 6.* Yet the first use we find of it, (not as a Relative-Title, but as a meer Honorary Complement, or complemental Honour) coming from the Children of *Heb* (who were *Heathens*) to *Abraham*, *Gen. 23. 6. 11. 15:* Is enough to perswade, that the Rise and first Use of it was among the Idolatrous and Heathen Nations; and from them came to be taken up, and used by the Fathers, and People of God afterwards (as many other things were) until the time of Reformation. And that *Jacob*, in fear of *Esau*, did therefore use it; as thinking he might thereby Please, and so appease the haughty Humour of his rough Brother.

The account which *Jacob's* Messengers brought him, when they came back from *Esau*, put him into a terrible Fright, for they brought no answer from *Esau*; but only told *Jacob*, that his Brother *Esau* was coming

Gen. 32. coming to meet him, and *Four-hundred Men* with him. This News did forely afflict *Jacob*: For he concluded, from the Number of Men which *Esau* brought with him, that he came against him with an *hostile Mind*. His strait was doubtless very great: Right he *durst not*: Fly he *could not*; having Women, young Children, and great Flocks and Herds of Cattel with him. The best Contrivance he could think of, was to *divide his Company*, all the People that were with him, and all the Cattel, into two Bands: Which being set at a *convenient distance* one from the other, he hoped that if *Esau* should fall upon one of them; the other, in the mean time, might have Opportunity to escape.

But tho' *Jacob* was willing to use what Politick means he could: Yet he trusted not to that. He knew *his Safety lay in a Divine Protection*: And he had lately experienced it in *Laban's Pursuit* of him. Wherefore in most Humble and Solemn manner, he addrest himself to God, in this earnest Supplication:

' O God of my Father *Abraham*, and God of my Father *Isaac*, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy Countrey, and to thy Kindred, and I will deal well with thee; I am not worthy of the least of all thy Mercies, and of all the Truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy Servant: For with my Staff I passed over this *Jordan*; and now I am become *two Bands*. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my Brother; from the hand of *Esau*: For I fear him; lest he will come and smite me, and the Mother with (or upon) the Children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy Seed as the Sand of the Sea, which cannot be numbred for Multitude.

Very observable is the *Humility* of *Jacob* in this Prayer, and the persuasive, and even forcible Reasons couched in it. He *arrogates nothing* to himself, nor so much as presumes to call him *his God*, or to approach him in his *own Name*; but says, O God of my Father *Abraham*, and God of my Father *Isaac*: Two, than whom none were more near, none more dear to God, since Man was made. Then putting him in mind, that he undertook his Journey by his Command, (*The Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy Countrey, &c.*) and under his safe Conduct too (and *I will deal well with thee*:) He abases himself to the lowest (*I am not worthy of the least of the Mercies, and of the Truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy Servant*;) which, how great they were, he shews, by his being now become *two Bands*, who went out with his Staff only. Then coming to the Subject of his Petition, he sets forth the Ground of his Fear and Danger; (*Deliver me, I pray thee, from the Hand of my Brother, from the hand of Esau, [rough, rugged, bloody Esau] who tho' he be my Natural Brother, is notwithstanding my avowed Enemy*:) for I fear him (as well I may; since he hath resolved my Death, and is now coming with an Army against me:) Lest he smite me, and (not me only, but my Wives and Children also) the Mother with, or upon, the Children, (while she, to save her Children, covers their Bodies with her own.) And besides all this, if thou shouldest suffer me and my Seed to be now cut off, how will thy Promise be fulfilled, who hast said, *I will surely do thee good, and make thy Seed as the Sand of the Sea for Multitude*?

Having thus implored the Divine Protection, he bethinks himself, that, since he had sent his Brother word how great Substance he had, it would not be amiss to send him a Present out of it. But not having time to pick and choose, lest *Esau* should be upon him before the Present could be delivered, he was fain to take it of that which came next to Hand. Setting out therefore *Two Hundred She-goats, and Twenty He-goats*, by themselves in a Drove; and *Two Hundred Ewes, and Twenty Rams*, in another Drove; *Thirty Milch-Camels, with their Colts*, in another

other Drove; *Forty Kine and Ten Bulls*, in another Drove; and *Twenty She-Asses, with Ten Ass-Foles*, in another Drove; he delivered them to his Servants, every Drove by it self: And ordering them to keep an handsome distance, or space between Drove and Drove, he sent them on before him; charging the Servant which followed the first Drove, that, when *Esau* should meet him, and should ask him, whom he belonged to, whither he was going, and whose those Cattel were, he should say, *They be thy Servant Jacob's, a Present sent unto my Lord Esau, and behold also he is behind us.* The same he gave in Charge to the other Servants, that went with the Second, Third, and every other Drove: Hoping that the Sight of so many various Presents, and the so often hearing from so many several Hands, such a *Submissive* and Obliging Message, might somewhat *mollify Esau's Harshness*, and dispose him to a Loving and Brotherly Temper, before they two should meet.

Having thus set forward his Present for his Brother, his next care was for his Wives and Children; all which he caused to pass that Night, at the Ford, over the Brook *Jabbok*: And after them sent over what else he had, *himself going last*. But in the Night, being left alone, there wrestled a Man with him, until the Breaking of the Day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the *Hollow of his Thigh*, and the Hollow of *Jacob's Thigh* was out of Joint as he wrestled with him. Then said the Man to him, *Let me go: For the Day breaketh.* But *Jacob* said, *I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.* The Man then asking him *what his Name was*, and he saying, *it was Jacob*; *Thy Name* (replied the other) *shall be called no more Jacob (only) but Israel: For as a Prince hast thou Power with God, and with Men, and hast prevailed.*

Some take this Man that wrestled with *Jacob* to be an *Angel* of God: Others *the Lord himself*, in form of a Man. Evident it is that *Jacob* did not take him for a Mortal Man, in that he asked a Blessing of him. And God, having seen the Distress of Mind, which *Jacob* was in, and received the Supplication which he had poured forth to him; was not content only to deliver him from his Brother *Esau*, by turning *Esau's* Anger into Love: But for his further Comfort, and the encouragement of his Faith, gave him in this Conflict, a fresh Proof of his Power, by which as he had now prevailed with God, he should prevail with his Brother also, as he had already lately done with his Father-in-Law, *Laban*. But that he might be sensible he had not prevailed by his own Strength, and therefore should not trust to that, but rely upon a Divine Support; he gave him a Touch in the hollow, (or bending part) of his Thigh, and thereby put the Joint out, which made him go halting off: By which means he that wrestled with him might easily have thrown him down, (nay, he would likely have fallen of himself,) had he not been upheld by a *Divine Hand*; which therefore it behoved him to keep to, and lean upon.

Just as the Sun arose, *Jacob* passed over *Penuel* (or *Peniel*,) the Place where he had his *wrestling Exercise*; and which he therefore called by that Name, which signifies the Face of God) Because (said he) *I have seen God Face to Face, and yet my Life is preserved*: Yet the Sinew of his Thigh shrinking, he halted as he went.

He had not gone far, before he espied *Esau* coming, with his Four Hundred Men at his Heels. At sight of whom, he began to dispose his Company into such an Order, as might be both fittest to receive him; and safest for them whom he had most regard for. Putting therefore the Handmaids, and their Children foremost, and *Leah* with her Children next, he set his beloved *Rachel*, and her Son *Joseph*, hindermost:

most: And then himself passing on before them, he bowed himself to the Ground *Seven* times, until he came near to his Brother. But *Esau* running to meet him, embraced him; and taking him about the Neck, kissed him; and they both wept together.

Afterwards *Esau*, taking notice of the Women and Children, asked *Jacob* who they were? Meaning, in what Relation they stood to him. Who telling him, They were the Children which God had graciously given him; The Women thereupon, with their Children, came forward, in their several Ranks and Order; and as they drew near, they bowed themselves, as the manner of those times was. *Esau* then inquiring, what he meant by all the Drovers which he had met before; he told him he sent them to him as a Present, to obtain his Favour. And when *Esau* would have excused himself from taking them, telling his Brother that he had enough, and therefore desiring him to keep what he had for himself; *Jacob*, overjoyed to find him so kind, intreated him to accept his Present, as a Testimony of his Favour to him. And that he might not refuse it, as thinking he could not well spare it, he added; *Take, I pray thee, my Blessing* (the Token of my Good will) *that is brought to thee, because God hath dealt graciously with me; and because I have all things* (to wit, that are needful or convenient for me) as indeed, every one has, who hath Him that is the Author, and Bestower of all things.

Upon *Jacob's* thus pressing him, *Esau* accepted his Present; and then proposed how they should order their Journey, so as to have one another's Company. But, *Jacob*, not fond of that, desired him to pass on before, and leave him to come leisurely after, according as the Cattel, and the Children could bear, until he should come to him in his own Countrey of *Seir*; where some think, he never intended to come: However, it doth not appear, that he ever did come there. *Esau* then courteously offered to leave him some of his Men, to attend him: But *Jacob* handsomely putting it by, as a thing whereof he had no need; they kindly parted: *Esau* taking his way towards *Seir* again, and *Jacob* journeying to *Succoth*; where he built him an House, and made *Booths* for his Cattel, from which the Place took that Name.

Removing afterwards to *Shalem*, (or *Salem*) a City of *Shechem*, in the Land of *Canaan*, when he came from *Padan-aram*; he pitched his Tent before the City. And having bought a Piece of a Field, where he had spread his Tent, of the Children of *Hamor* (whom *Stephen* calls *Emmor*, *Acts* 7. 16.) for an Hundred Pieces of Money, (on which the Image of a Lamb being stamped, it is therefore sometimes rendred an Hundred Lambs;) he there erected an Altar: Which (as a thankful Monument of those great Deliverances, wrought for him by that powerful Arm, which had preserved him through many Dangers, and brought him safe thither) he dedicated *to the Mighty God, the God of Israel*.

Gen. 34. A. M. 2274. During the time that *Jacob* staid in this Place, his only Daughter, *Dinah*, took a walk abroad, out of a Curiosity to see the Daughters of the Land: Whom young *Shechem* (Son of *Hamor* the *Hivite*, Prince of that Country, descended from *Canaan*, Son of cursed *Ham*, (*Gen.* 10. 17.) seeing, fell in love with; and having her in his power, destitute of all help from her Relations, he lay with her, and defiled her. And not willing afterwards to part with her, being extreamly enamoured of her, he desired his Father to obtain her for his Wife.

Jacob had heard of the Rape, committed on his Daughter. But in as much as his Sons were with his Cattel in the Field; he forbore to take notice of it till they were come home. They hearing of it, hastened home, being

being much grieved for the Evil committed, and highly *incensed* for the *Injury* done to their Sister, and the *Dishonour* to their Family. Gen. 34.

Hamor soon after came to *treat* with *Jacob* about the *Match*, and finding him and his Sons together, acquainted them how strong an Affection his Son *Shechem* had for *Dinah*; intreating them to give him her to Wife: And inviting them to *Intermarry* with his People, offered them the *Freedom* of the Country, to Dwell, and Trade, and get Possessions in; young *Shechem* also, being present with his Father, begged them to grant him his Request; offering to give them whatsoever they would ask, be it never so much, so they would but give him the Damsel to Wife.

Jacob's Sons, some at least of the most forward of them, undertook to *manage the Treaty*: And *concealing* their *Displeasure*, but *meditating Revenge*, laid a *Train* to draw them within their reach. Wherefore having told them (and that truly) that they could not, according to the Law of their Religion, give their Sister in Marriage to one that was not Circumcised; they yet made them believe, that if they would be Circumcised, and procure their People to be, every Male of them Circumcised, as they were, they would then joyn with them, in mutual Marriages, would settle among them, and incorporate with them as one People. But withal they let them know, that if they would not agree to this, to be all Circumcised, they would take their Sister and be gone.

Hamor and *Shechem* were well pleased with the Terms; the young Man especially, who, for the Delight he had in *Dinah*, bestirred himself to bring his People to consent thereunto. His Father therefore and he, as soon as they were come back to the City, falling into Discourse with their Citizens, commended the *Israelites* for *peaceable* Men, and advised their People to let them dwell, and trade in the Land, seeing it was large enough for them both, and to *reciprocate Marriages* with them, by giving them Daughters, and taking Daughters of them for Wives. Only they told them, There was no way to bring the *Israelites* to agree to this, but by their Yielding to be Circumcised, as the *Israelites* were. Which the better to draw them to, they laid before them the *Advantages* that would accrue to them, from this Intermixture and Commerce. *For shall not* (said they) *their Cattel, and their Substance, and every Beast of theirs be ours?* We being so much stronger than they; This was a moving Argument: And *Shechem* having a great Interest in the People (for he was more Honourable, that is, more Regarded, than all the House of his Father besides) they all consented. and every Male of them was Circumcised.

Here was Policy on both sides. *Jacob's* Sons urged Circumcision upon the *Shechemites*, only to gain an Opportunity to wreak their *Revenge* on them. *Hamor* and *Shechem* allured their People, with the Hopes of possessing *Jacob's* Substance, only that *Shechem* might obtain his desired End, the *Enjoyment of Dinah*.

Now had those Sons of *Jacob*, who had laid this *Train*, gained their Point. Wherefore on the Third Day after this bloody Operation, when the *Shechemites* were in the height of *Soreness*, two of *Dinah's* Brethren, *Simeon* and *Levi*, came boldly upon the City, and having each of them his Sword, slew all the Males.

In this Action there is none named, but these two: Yet some (not without Reason) think, that the rest of *Jacob's* Sons, who were old enough for such an *Exploit*, and their Servants also, were engaged in the Execution; tho' these two only, as *Authors* of the *Design*, are named. And indeed, it is hard to conceive, that Two Men should be able

to master a City, and slay all the Men therein (tho' somewhat hurt, in
 Gen. 34. such a part of the Body, as would not wholly disable them from
 Action and Defence:) and should also take all the *Women Captives*,
 who of themselves may be supposed to have been more than sufficient to
 over-power two Men.

Hamor, and *Shechem* his Son, who gave the Occasion for this *Massa-*
cre, they put to the sword among the rest: And finding their Sister
 in *Shechem's* House, they took her away. Then falling on the *Spoil*,
 they took not only all that was in the City; but that also which was
 in the Field: Their Sheep, their Oxen, their Asses, and all their *Wealth*.
 Their Little Ones also, and their Wives, they took Captives: And what
 they could not carry away, that they Spoiled; that they might *Glut*
their Revenge upon the *Shechemites*, for the *defiling* of their Sister.

Good *Jacob* shewed, by his dislike of the Action, that he was not privy
 to the Design. And blaming *Simeon* and *Levi* for it, he told them
 they had by this means troubled him, and made him stink among the *In-*
habitants of the Land (the *Canaanites* and *Perizzites*;) who tho' they
 were in time to be cut off, to make way for *Israel*: Yet not till the
 time allotted them by God was expired; nor then by *Assassinations*,
 but in fair and open War. He also put them to consider, that by this
Treachery, and *Cruel Dealing* of theirs, they had exposed both him and
 themselves, to the *Rage* and *Revenge* of those People: Who knowing
 themselves to be much stronger than he, might be likely enough
 to combine together, and destroy him and his Family. To all which,
 his Sons, esteeming the Rape committed on their Sister, a Crime hei-
 nous enough to justify the most extream Severity, made him no other
 Answer than this, *Should he deal with our Sister as with an Harlot?*
 And here it may be worth Noting, that they, who submitted them-
 selves to be Circumcised, not from a Religious ground, but in hopes
 thereby to get all *Jacob's* Cattel and Wealth, did thereby lose all their
 own, together with their Lives.

Gen. 35. But as *Jacob's* Fear was not groundless, God took care to ease him of
 it, by removing him from the Danger. Wherefore he bid him *Arise*,
and go up to Beth-el, and dwell there: And make there an Altar unto God,
 who had appeared to him, to comfort and strengthen him, when he
 fled from the face of his Brother *Esau*; of whom he was then as much
 afraid, as he was now of these People.

Jacob hereupon gave strict charge to his Family, and to all that be-
 longed to him, that they should put away the *Strange Gods* which they
 had, and be clean, and change their Garments (a Type of Sanctification:)
 and then let us arise (said he) and go up to *Beth-el*; the House of God.
 Perhaps he might by this time have discovered, that *Rachel* had got, and
 kept her Father's Idols. However, by this means *Jacob* got from them
 all the *strange Gods* they had, and together with them their *Ear-rings*;
 which by some People were worn in a *Superstitious Devotion*, as being
 thought to have some *Magical Vertue*, or Charm in them. And 'tis not
 unlikely, that some of *Jacob's* Servants, if they themselves were not
Ishmaelites, might have taken up the use of wearing Ear-rings from
 the *Ishmaelites*, amongst whom it was afterwards a known Fashion, *Judg.*
 8. 24.

These Ear-rings, that they might not become a Snare to him and his
 Family, as the like did afterwards to *Gideon* (*Judg.* 8. 27.) *Jacob* re-
 solved to make sure of as well as of the Idols. Therefore he did not
 only bury them; but he hid them. He buried them so privily, that none
 of his Family should know where they were laid, to take them up
 again. He hid them under the Oak by *Shechem*: And then set forward
 on

on their Journey towards *Beth-el*. And God struck such a terror upon the Cities round about him, as he went; that notwithstanding the *Pro-Gen. 35.* vocation his Sons had given, by the *Outrage* they had committed at *Shechem*, no body pursued after them.

Being come to *Beth-el* (heretofore *Luz*;) he there built an Altar, as God had commanded him. And upon *that Altar*, and at *that time*, it is supposed he performed *the Vow* he had made, when God appeared to him, in the same place, as he fled from his Brother *Esau*, *Gen. 28. 20, 22.* Which when he had performed, God appearing to him again, confirmed unto him his new Name *Israel*; and gave him repeated Assurances of his Promises made to *Abraham* and to *Isaac*, with new Blessings to himself. Whereupon *Jacob*, in the Place where God had now talked with him, did set up a *Pillar of Stone*, as a *lasting Monument* of his *Gratitude* and *Devotion*, and poured a Drink-Offering and Oyl thereon.

At *Beth-el* he buried *Deborah*, his Mother's Nurse. Who for what reason she is here mentioned, or how she now came to be in his Family, is not clear. It is conjectured, that, after she had attended her Mistress *Rebekah* to her Marriage, and seen her well settled in her Family, she went back to *Haran* again, and there dwelt in *Laban's* House, till *Jacob* returning home, she put her self into the Company, with a desire to see her old Mistress once again. Doubtless she was had in good esteem by them, because they bewailed her Death so much, that the Oak, under which she was buried, was called *The Oak of Weeping*.

Jacob staid not long at *Beth-el*; but hastened to *Mamre*, to see his Father: And *Ephrath* (afterwards called *Beth-lehem*) being in their way, they aimed to have got thither. But tho' they had but a little way to it, they could not reach the Town, before *Rachel* fell in Travail of her Second and last Child. Who having hard labour, the Midwife, to encourage her, bid her not fear, for she should have this Son also. She was indeed delivered of him, but died immediately, and just as she departed, she called the Boy's Name *Ben-oni*; that is, *the Son of my Sorrow*. But his Father (probably not liking that the remembrance of so sorrowful a Subject should be perpetuated, and continually renewed to him, as oft as he should hear his Son Named :) Called him *Benjamin*, which signifies *The Son of my right hand*; intimating thereby how near and dear he should be to him.

Having buried *Rachel* on the way, in the Place where she died, and for a mark to know it by, set up a Pillar upon her Grave, *Jacob* went on his Journey. But ere he could reach *Mamre*, where his Father dwelt, an Occasion of greater grief than this (tho' doubtless this, considering the passionate Love he bare to *Rachel*, must needs be very great,) befel him. For *Reuben*, his eldest Son defiled his Father's Bed, by committing Incest with *Bilhah*, *Rachel's* Handmaid, and his Father's secondary Wife or Concubine. *Jacob*, it seems, heard of it: Yet I don't find he did then take any publick Notice of it. But doubtless it sank deep into his Mind, and stuck by him to his dying Day: For just before his Death, giving his Blessing amongst his Children, he rubb'd *Reuben* with this: *Reuben*, said he, *Thou art my First-born, my Might, and the Beginning of my Strength, the Excellency of Dignity, and the Excellency of Power.* This had been his Portion, by vertue of his Birth-right, had he not by that Transgression lost it. But now, being become *Unstable as Water* (which advanced never so high, falls down again) his Doom was, *Thou shalt not excel, because thou wentest up to thy Father's Bed, and defiledst it, Gen. 49. 3, 4.* So to *Judah*, of whom our Lord was

to come, was Reuben's Birth-right transferred (*ver. 8.*) from whom
Gen. 35. also in time it fell to the Son of Rachel, who in right should have been Jacob's first Wife, and whom Jacob thought he had imbraced, when he begat Reuben.

At length Jacob reached Mamre, the City of Arbah (afterwards Hebron) where his Grandfather Abraham had sojourned, and his Father Isaac then dwelt, who may well be supposed to have rejoiced greatly for his Son Jacob's safe Return, after so long an Absence. As well as Jacob, in that he found his Father living, and in Health.

But long he had not been here, ere another sorrowful Exercise befel him : whereof this was the occasion.

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His Son Joseph having now attained to the *seventeenth* Year of his Age, was with his Brethren (*Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher, the Sons of Jacob by Bilhah and Zilpah*) feeding the Flock ; and he told Tales of them to his Father : Which estranged their Love from him. His Father also could not conceal the extraordinary Love he bare to Joseph, more than to all his other Children ; both as he was the Son of his old Age, and the Eldest Son of his best-beloved Rachel : But he must needs make him a fine Coat, of divers Colours, to distinguish him from all his Brethren ; for which they stomached him, and could not give him a good Word.

Gen. 37.

Neither was this all. Joseph had two very significant Dreams, which he told his Brethren : And that made them hate him the more. His first Dream was, that his Brethren and he binding Sheaves together in the Field ; his Sheaf arose, and stood upright : And their Sheaves round about, made Obeisance to his Sheaf. When he had told this Dream to his Brethren, they answered, with disdainful Scorn, *Shalt thou indeed reign over us ? Or shalt thou indeed have Dominion over us ?* And they hated him the more for this. But he, poor Lad, went on, and dreamed again, That the Sun, and the Moon, and the Eleven Stars made Obeisance to him. This Dream also, in his childish Simplicity, he told, not to his Brethren only, but to his Father too. His Father, observing the Tendency of the Dream, and knowing his Brethren did not already well brook him ; not only rebuked him for it before them : But a little to ridicule it, by applying it to Rachel, who was dead and buried, as well as to himself and them ; asked him, *Shall I, and thy Mother, and thy Brethren, indeed come to bow down our selves to thee to the Earth ?* As if he had said, If thou couldst expect that from me, and thy Brethren : Yet must thy Mother arise out of her Grave, and come to bow to thee ? Not considering that, tho' Rachel, his Natural Mother, was Dead : Yet Leah, his Step-mother, was still living. But tho' his Father was willing thus to make light of it, that it might be the less Offence to his Brethren : Yet it made an Impression on Jacob's Mind.

Soon after this, his Brethren being gone to feed the Flock, in Shechem, Israel sent Joseph to see how they did ; and how the Flocks stood in health : Bidding him bring him word again. Joseph thereupon going out of the Vale of Hebron to Shechem, and not finding them there, wandered about ; till a certain Man finding him, and upon Inquiry, understanding he looked for his Brethren, directed him to Dothan, whither they were gone : And thither he went after them.

As soon as they saw him, and before he came up to them, having let in a deep Offence into their Minds against him, because of his Dreams, they conspired to slay him, saying one to another, *Behold, this Master-Dreamer is coming ; as soon as he comes let us slay him, and cast him into some Pit ; and we will say, Some evil Beast hath devoured him : And then we shall see what will become of his Dreams.*

Reuben,

Reuben hearing this bloody Contrivance, and wholly disliking it, studied how to prevent it; that he might deliver him safe to his Father again. Wherefore persuading them not to kill him, he advised them to *abstain from shedding Blood*: But rather (said he) *cast him into this Pit*, that is in the Wilderness; and lay no (violent) hand upon him. The rest, considering that if he perished in that Pit, that would as well answer their End, of ridding themselves of him, consented to Reuben's Counsel.

Accordingly, when Joseph was come up to them, they seized on him, took off his gay Coat, and cast him into the Pit; which at that time was dry and empty. Poor Joseph mean while, extremely frightened with this rough Entertainment, and bitterly crying out in the Anguish of his Soul, besought his Brethren not to kill him; nor to throw him into that Pit, where he must miserably die by Famine: But they, being resolutely bent to destroy him, would not hear him.

Reuben, seeing him put into the Pit, conceived good Hope, that he should find means to deliver him from thence; and therefore seemed to concur with them. But he going from them, on some occasion; they (while they were eating some Victuals) espied a Company of Ishmaelites, coming from Gilead, and going down to Egypt, with their Camels, laden with Spicery, and other Merchandise. At sight of these, Judah said to the rest of them, *What shall we get by killing our Brother, and concealing his Blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites; and let not our hand be upon him: For he is our Brother, and our Flesh.* The rest, considering that by this means they should rid their hands of him, without shedding his Blood, and should get something by the Bargain too, closed with the Proposition; and drawing up Joseph out of the Pit, notwithstanding his most earnest Intreaty, having (now that Reuben was absent) no Advocate for him amongst them, they sold him to those Ishmaelitic Merchants, for Twenty Pieces (or Shekels) of Silver: And these carrying him into Egypt, sold him to Potiphar, an Officer to King Pharaoh, and Captain of his Guards.

But when Reuben, returning by the Pit, missed Joseph; fearing they had slain him in his Absence, he rent his Cloaths, (which was the Custom of those Countries and Times, to express the highest Grief; and of which tho' afterwards more frequently used, this is the first Instance we have:) And coming to his Brethren, he cried out, *Alas, the Child is gone; what shall become of me? Or whither shall I go?* For poor Reuben, having greatly offended his Father before (in his Trespass with Bilhah, his Father's Concubine) and probably hoping to have regained his Favour, by preserving his Beloved Son, and restoring him safe to him: Having now lost the Hope of that Advantage, and reasonably fearing, that his Father's Displeasure would fall heaviest on him, both as he was highly Offended with him already, and as he, being the Eldest, should have had most Care of the Younger; was wonderfully troubled for the Loss of Joseph.

But the rest of the Brethren, contriving how to manage the matter to their Father, so as to throw off all Suspicion from themselves, took Joseph's Coat; and having killed a Kid, and dipped the Coat in the Blood; they sent it to their Father, by some that should say to him, *This have we found: See whether it be thy Son's Coat or no?*

Poor Jacob, to his Sorrow, knew the Coat, and said, *It is my Son's Coat.* And being deceived by the Blood which was on it, not suspecting his other Sons could have been guilty of such Unnatural Cruelty, he cried out, *An Evil Beast hath devoured him: Joseph is, without doubt, rent in pieces.* Then, through Extremity of Grief, renting his Cloaths,

Cloaths, he put Sackcloth upon his Loins, and mourned for his Son
Gen. 37. many Days.

It is probable, that when his guilty Sons saw their Father thus overwhelm'd with Sorrow, it might make their hard Hearts relent : And tho' they durst not discover to him what they had done unto *Joseph*, which had been the only way to mitigate his Grief ; yet they, (bad as they were) undertook to *Comfort him* ; and so did (and innocently might) their Wives, and their Sister *Dinah*. But he, refusing to be comforted, said, *I will go down into the Grave to my Son, mourning* : Meaning thereby, that he would not cease mourning for his Son, so long as he lived.

Gen. 38. Some time before this fell out, *Judah* had committed a great Fault, in marrying a *Canaanitish* Woman ; by whom he had Three Sons, viz. *Er*, *Onan* and *Shelah*. But because this led him into a greater Transgression afterwards ; which was not fully compleated till after *Joseph* was sold ; and gone into *Egypt* : *Moses* deferred the first part of it, that he might give the Story intire together ; which was thus :

Judah going down from his Brethren, turned aside to a certain *Adullamite*, whose Name was *Hirah* ; with whom he contracted a Friendship, which proved a Snare to him : For being at *Hirah's* House, he there saw a Daughter of a certain *Canaanite*, whose Name was *Shuah* ; and taking a Fancy to her, he married her, and by her had those Three Sons, whom I mention'd before.

In process of time, when *Er*, his eldest Son, was grown Marriageable, he took a Wife for him, whose Name was *Thamar*. But *Er*, proving a Wicked Man in the Sight of the Lord, however he might appear to Men, *the Lord slew him*. He thus dead without Issue, *Judah* bids his Second Son, *Onan*, marry his Brother's Wife ; and lie with her, that he might raise up Seed to his Brother.

This was long before the Law, by which it was afterwards enjoined, *Deut. 25. 5.* was given ; and yet, tho' this be the first mention we have of it, it seems it was then a known Custom, and well understood even by young *Onan* : For he knew that *the Seed should not be his*, but that the First-born of such a Conjunction should be reputed the Seed of the Deceased Brother, and should bear his Name, as was afterwards declared, *Deut. 25. 6.* When therefore *Onan* went in unto his Brother's Wife, he spilled his Seed on the ground, that he might not give Seed to his Brother : Which thing so displeased the Lord, that he slew him also.

Shelah, the Third Son, was yet too young. Wherefore *Judah* desired his Daughter-in-law *Thamar*, to go to her Father's House, and there remain a Widow, till his Son *Shelah* should be grown up : Which *Thamar* did, expecting that, when he was grown up, she should have been given to him. But when she saw that *Shelah* was grown up to Man's Estate, and yet she was not given unto him ; taking it ill that she was so neglected, she watched a time, when her Father-in-law *Judah*, having buried his Wife, went up to his Sheep-shearers at *Timnath*, to comfort himself there, with his Friend *Hirah*, the *Adullamite* : And having laid aside the Garments of her Widowhood, and covered and wrapped her self up in a Vail ; she sat her down in a Place where two Ways met, by the Way that *Judah* was to pass to *Timnath*.

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When he came, and saw her sitting there, with her Face covered, not thinking she had been his Daughter-in-law, but concluding, that she was a common Harlot, that sat there to let her self out to hire ; he stept to her, and asked her to let him lie with her. She was as forward to yield, as he to offer ; only she was willing to know, upon what Terms :

And

And therefore asked him what he would give her? He told her, he would send her a Kid from the Flock; which she accepted: But having a further Design upon him, she demanded a Pledge of him, until he should send the Kid. He asking her, what Pledge he should give her, she pitched upon his Signet, his Staff and Bracelets, (so we read it in the English Bibles:) But some think, instead of Bracelets, it should rather be read, his Handkercher; it not being clear, that in those times the Men of Israel did wear Bracelets. Tremellius and Junius turn it by Sudarium; which signifies an Handkerchief, and Dr. Gell thinks it should be so. (See his Essay, p. 176.) Whatever it was, he delivered them to her: Whereupon, the Terms being agreed, they went together; and she conceived by him.

As soon as he had left her, she left the Place; not staying for the Kid (for she regarded not the Hire, but the Pledge:) and putting off her Vail, dressed her self in her Widow's Attire again. Judah being got to his Flock, made haste to send the Kid, by his Friend the Adullamite, that he might receive his Pledge again; but Hirah could neither find her, nor hear of her: Which he, returning, told Judah; who thinking it best, for his own Reputation, not to make much Enquiry after her, said, Let her take it to her, if she will, lest we be shamed.

About Three Months after, Judah was told, that his Daughter-in-law Thamar had played the Harlot, and was with Child. He thereupon, rashly passing Sentence on her unheard, said, Bring her forth, and let her be burnt. Now her Pledge stood her in stead. For sending them to him, she desired him to consider whose those things (the Signet, Staff, &c.) were, For by the Man, whose these are, am I (said she) with Child. Judah now, seeing himself caught, acknowledged them to be his; and confessing his Fault, in not having given her to his Son Shelah, declared she was more Righteous than he.

When the time for her Delivery was come, she proved with Child of Twins; whereof one putting out his Hand, the Midwife bound a Scarlet Thread about it: But he drawing his Hand back again, his Brother brake by him, and came out before him. Whereupon he was called Pharez, a Breach: And the other, with the Thread on his Hand, was called Zarah. Thus instead of the Brother raising up Seed to his deceased Brother; the Father raised Seed to his deceased Son: But used her no more afterwards.

Now tho' this latter part of Judah's Story relating to his Incest with his Daughter Thamar, was acted after Joseph was sold, and while he was in Egypt: Yet the former part of it, relating his Marriage with Shuah's Daughter, and the Birth of his Three Sons by her, must needs have fallen out before Joseph was sold. For there being but Two and Twenty, or at the most Three and Twenty Years, between Joseph's being sold into Egypt, and Jacob's going down into Egypt to him; it could not be (which Tremellius and Junius well observe) that in so short a space, Judah could marry a Wife, have Three Sons; at Three several Births, by her, marry two of those Sons successively, to one Woman, defer the Marriage of the Third Son to the same Woman, beyond the due time, afterwards himself have Sons by the same Woman (his Daughter-in-law) and one of those Sons, Pharez, beget Two Sons, Hezron and Hamul, (Gen. 46. 12.) before Jacob went down into Egypt.

Within this time also Isaac, the longest Liver of any since Terah, being an Hundred and Fourscore Years of Age, gave up the Ghost; and was buried by his Sons, Esau and Jacob, (Gen. 35. 28, 29.) in the Cave, in the Field of Machpelah before Mamre, which Abraham had bought of Ephron

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2288.

Ephron the Hittite, for a Possession of a Burying-ground, and in which he, and *Sarah* his Wife, had been buried, *Gen.* 49. 30, 31. What time *Rebekah*, *Isaac's* Wife, died is not set down in the Holy Scriptures; only that she was buried in the same Place, in which her Husband was. But *Broughton* says the *Rabbins* hold, that she died in the Hundred Thirty Seventh Year of her Age, which was the Hundred Fifty Sixth of her Husband's, a Year before *Jacob* left *Laban*. By which Computation, she must have been Nineteen Years old, when she married *Isaac* at Forty. But surely, if she were so old when she died, *Deborah* her Nurse must needs have lived to a great Age, who out-lived her, and yet must be supposed to have been older than she, when she undertook to be her Nurse.

Isaac's Funeral being over, *Esau*, considering that his Brother and he had, each of them, too great Stock and Substance, to dwell together, or very near one to the other; departed from his Brother *Jacob*: And yielding to him the Privilege of Birth-right, took his Wives and Children, and all his Family, with his Cattel, Beasts, and all his Substance, which he had gotten in the Land of *Canaan*, and went and dwelt in Mount *Seir*; which signifies *Bristled*, or *Hairy*: A fit Place for such an *Hairy* Man to dwell in. But *Jacob* succeeded his Father, in his Estate, dwelt where his Father did, in the Land of *Canaan*.

The Generations of *Esau* are set down in *Gen.* 36. with the Names of the Dukes, and Kings that came out of him; and the Places where they settled: Which serves to give Light to many Places in the Scriptures, especially in the Writings of the Prophets; for the finding out the Originals and Settlements of Families, People and Nations derived from him.

Gen. 39. The last Account we had of *Joseph* was, that he was sold to *Potiphar*, Captain of the Guards to the King of *Egypt*; who soon found the Goodness of his Bargain, in the Advantage of having a Faithful Servant: For the Lord was with *Joseph*, and made all that he had to prosper in his Hand; and his Master saw it. Wherefore *Joseph* grew much into his Master's Favour, who raised him still higher and higher in his Family, till at length he made him Overseer over his House; and put all that he had into his Hand: leaving his whole Estate within Doors and without, to his Care and Ordering. Nor could he have done better for his own Advantage: For the Lord blessed the Egyptian's Family, for *Joseph's* sake; so that the Blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had, both in the House, and in the Field.

A. M. 2286. Now *Joseph* being a Comely, Handsome, Personable Young Man, his Master's Wife had cast an Amorous Eye upon him, to have drawn him into a wanton Familiarity with her: But finding her Allurements did not work upon him; and yet that her Desire went forth strongly after him; she was fain to speak plain, and ask him down-right to lie with her: *Joseph* not only gave her a short and positive Denial; but to free himself from her further Importunity, gave her the Reason of his Denial: Desiring her to consider the great Trust and Confidence his Master had reposed in him; and the great Ingratitude he should be guilty of; if he should so abuse his Master. My Master, said he, hath committed to my Hand all that he hath; in such manner, that he requires no Account of me, nor knows what he has in the House. He hath advanced me so high, that there is no Man in this House, except himself, greater than I: Neither hath he kept back any thing from me, but thee; and thee, because thou art his Wife. How then can I do this great Wickedness (to betray so great a Trust,) and sin against God?

This

This *Repulse*, which he hoped would have put a stop to her *lewd* Passion, had not so good an Effect on her: But she, persisting in *unlawful* Gen. 39: Desires, lay at him day by day to commit Evil with her. And when she saw that he would not hearken to her, to be enticed to lie with her, *but shunned her Company*, she watched an Opportunity one time, when he came into the House, to order things belonging to his Office; and there being none of the Men of the House within at that time, she on a sudden caught hold of him by his *Cloak*, and pressed him then to lie with her. He, not knowing how otherwise to get from her, let fall his Cloak in her Hand, and slipping away, got out of her reach.

When she saw that he had left his Cloak in her Hand; and was run from her, despairing thence forward of obtaining her Desire, and being afraid lest he should discover her *Naughtiness*, she, moved partly with *Revengeful Rage*, and partly with *Policy*, to prevent his accusing her, by making the *first Charge* upon him, called out aloud to the Men that were about the House, and holding forth *Joseph's* Cloak in her Hand, said to them, *See, He* (meaning her Husband) *hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us* (that is, to bring Contempt upon us, and thereby expose us to be scorned and mocked by others.) Thus *craftily* she joyned them with her self, [to mock Us;] thereby to engage them to take her part, in case *Joseph* should stand upon his *Purgation*. And she called him not by his Name, but by the Name of his People, [an *Hebrew*,] to set them the more against him: For the *Egyptians* hated the *Hebrews*. Then going on with her *Tale*, she said, *He came in unto me to lie with me; and I cryed with a great Voice: And when he heard that I lift up my Voice and cryed, he left his Cloak with me, and fled, and got away.*

Having thus prepared the Men to second her Complaint, if need should be, she laid up *Joseph's* Cloak until her Lord came home: And then *spreading* the *Garment*, together with her *Complaint*, before him, she accused *Joseph* to his Master, much after the same manner, as she had before done to the Men.

The *too-credulous* Master, having heard his Wife's Complaint, not suspecting her of Falseness, and being deceived by the Sight of *Joseph's* well-known Cloak, took honest *Joseph*, and being inflamed with Wrath against him, put him into the Round-Tower, a Place where the King's Prisoners were bound; and there lay poor *Joseph* in Irons, *Psal.* 105. 18.

How hard was now the Case of this poor Young Man; a *Stranger* amongst *Strangers*, in a *strange Land*, having no Relation, no Friend, to stand by him, to plead his Cause, to intercede for him! But he had Innocency, and the Lord was with him: For he never leaves them destitute, that fear him, and suffer innocently. And now he extended his Kindness to *Joseph* in the Prison, and brought him into favour with the Goaler; so that the Goaler committed all the Prisoners to *Joseph's* Care, and whatsoever was done in the Prison, was done by his Order and Direction: For the Goaler looked not after any thing, but left all to him; because he was sensible that the Lord was with him, and prospered all he took in Hand. Thus *Joseph* was now Overseer of the Prison, as he had been before of *Potiphar's* House.

But still *Joseph* was a Prisoner. Wherefore the Lord, in due time, caused other Prisoners to be brought in, to make way for *Joseph* to be brought out: The manner whereof was thus. The chief Butler, and chief Baker of *Pharaoh* King of *Egypt*, had offended their Lord, the King: For which he, being wroth with them, committed them to Gen. 40. the same Prison, in which *Joseph* was a Prisoner: And the Keeper of the

the Prison charging *Josepb* with them; he, because they were Courtiers, waited on them himself.

Gen. 40.

In one and the same Night, while they were in Prison, each of them dreamed a Dream: And when *Josepb* came to them in the morning, finding them both sad, he asked them what ailed them that they looked so sorrowfully? They told him, they had each of them dreamed a Dream that Night, which troubled them: And the rather, because they knew not the Meaning of their Dreams, having none to interpret them to them. For the *Egyptians* depended much upon *Soothsayers*, for interpreting Dreams: And there being no *Soothsayer* in the Prison, Nor they (who were close Prisoners) having liberty, either to go out to, or send for a *Soothsayer* in to them, they knew not how to come by the Interpretation of their Dreams.

Josepb, having taken them off from depending on *Soothsayers*, by referring them to God, to whom Interpretations of Dreams belong, desired them to let him hear their Dreams. Whereupon the Butler beginning, related his Dream thus.

In my Dream, behold, a Vine was before me; and in the Vine were three Branches: And it was as tho' it budded, and her Blossoms shot forth; and the Clusters thereof brought forth ripe Grapes. And I, having Pharaoh's Cup in my hand, took the Grapes, and having pressed them into the Cup, gave it into Pharaoh's Hand.

Josepb having heard the Dream, presently told the Butler (not conjecturally, but positively) *This is the Interpretation of the Dream, The three Branches signify three Days. And within these three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head, reckoning thee among his Servants again; and shall restore thee unto thy Place, and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's Cup into his hand, as thou wast wont to do heretofore, while thou wast his Butler. But (added he) think on me, when it shall be well with thee; and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, in making mention of me to Pharaoh, to bring me out of this house: For indeed I was stollen away out of the Land of the Hebrews; and have not done any thing since I came into Egypt, for which they should put me into this Prison.*

When the Baker saw that the Butler had got a good Interpretation of his Dream, he was forward to tell his Dream also to *Josepb*: And *Josepb* being as attentive to hear, he thus related it. *I also (said he) was in my Dream, and behold, I had three Baskets of Open-work on my head, and in the Uppermost was all manner of Baker's Meats for Pharaoh, and the Birds did eat them out of the Basket upon my Head.*

No sooner had *Josepb* heard the Dream, but he presently told the Baker, this is the Interpretation thereof. *The three Baskets signify Three days; and within these three days shall Pharaoh lift thee quite out of thy Office; and shall hang thee on a Tree: And the Birds shall eat thy Flesh from off thee. Accordingly, on the third Day after, it being Pharaoh's Birth-day, he made a Feast unto all his Servants; and then did he restore the chief Butler to his Office again, who thereupon gave the Cup into Pharaoh's hand: But he hanged the chief Baker; and so was *Josepb's* Interpretation of their Dreams fulfilled to each of them.*

Well might *Josepb* have expected (when he heard of the Butler's being restored to his Office, and to the King's Favour) that the Butler would have remembered him, and endeavoured his Release. But the heedless Butler forgot him, and two long years more was he fain to lie in Prison, ere any way opened towards his Deliverance.

Gen. 41. At the end of those two years, *Pharaoh* himself dreamed, that as he stood by the River (Nile) there came up out of the River seven well-favoured Kine, and fat-fleshed, which fed in a Meadow. And that after them seven

Seven other Kine came up out of the River, poor, ill-favoured and lean-fleshed, such as he had never seen in Egypt; and stood by the other Gen. 41. Kine upon the Brink of the River. And that the ill-favoured and lean Kine did eat up the seven well-favoured and Fat Kine, and yet seemed never the fuller. Upon which Pharaoh awoke: and then falling asleep again, he dreamed a second Dream, which was, That seven Ears of Corn came up upon one stalk, full and good: And that seven thin withered Ears, and blasted with the East-wind, sprang up after them; and devoured the seven full Ears.

Pharaoh hereupon awoke again; and his Dream remaining with him, brought trouble upon his Spirit in the Morning. Wherefore he sent and called all the *Magicians* and *Wisemen* of *Egypt*, and told his Dreams to them: But none of them could interpret them unto him.

Now at length did the chief Butler remember *Joseph*: Wherefore he acquainted the King, that when he and the Baker were in Prison together, each of them in one Night dreamed a Dream; which a young Man, an *Hebrew* Servant to the Captain of the Guard, did interpret to them, just as the Event answered.

Upon this Pharaoh immediately sent for *Joseph*, and they that went for him, brought him hastily out of the Dungeon: But not being in a fit garb to appear before a King, he shaved himself, and put on clean Cloaths, and then presented himself before Pharaoh. The King presently told him he had dreamed a Dream, and could not find any one that could interpret it: But (said he) I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a Dream, so as to give the Interpretation of it.

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2289.

Joseph modestly excusing himself, gave the King to understand, that he did not pretend to any Skill of himself; lest Pharaoh should afterwards have thought he had done it by *Magical Art*, as his *Magicians* pretended to do: Yet to impress his mind with the greater regard to the Interpretation which should be given, he told him also, that God, the only true Interpreter of Dreams, would give him an answer of Peace, or to his satisfaction.

Pharaoh then relating to him his Dreams in order, *Joseph* told him, his Dreams, tho' two in appearance, were but one in substance, and had both but one Signification: For (said he) the seven good Kine do signify seven years; and the seven good Ears do also signify the same seven years: and both these do signify seven years of Plenty. So also the seven ill-favoured Kine do signify seven years, and the seven empty Ears do signify the same seven years: And both these do signify seven years of Famine; by which (added he) God hath shewed unto Pharaoh what he is about to do. For as the seven good Kine, and the seven good Ears, came up first, and after them the seven ill-favoured Kine, and the seven blasted Ears: So there shall first come seven years of great Plenty throughout all the Land of *Egypt*; and after them shall arise seven years of Famine, so great, that all the Plenty shall be forgotten in the Land of *Egypt*, and not be known, by reason of the Famine following. Which shall be so very heavy, that it shall consume the Inhabitants of the Land. And the doubling of the Dream, he told him, was to assure him of the Certainty and Speediness of its coming to pass.

Having thus given the Interpretation of the Dream, *Joseph* proceeded to offer Advice to Pharaoh, how he might improve the Dream to Advantage. Therefore said he, Let Pharaoh now look out a Man discreet and wise, and set him over the Land of *Egypt*; and let him appoint Overseers over the Land, who may take up the Fifth part of the Products of the Land of *Egypt*, in the seven Plenteous years. And let them gather all the Food of those good years that come, and lay up Corn

in Pharaoh's Store-houses; and let them keep Food in the Cities, which
 Gen. 41. shall be for Store to the Land against the seven years of Famine, that
 shall be in the Land, that the People be not cut off through the Fa-
 mine.

Both the Interpretation of the Dream, and the Counsel which Joseph had thereupon given, Pleased Pharaoh and his Servants so well, that the King (having said to his Servants, *Can we find such an One as this is, a Man in whom the Spirit of God is?*) turning his speech to Joseph, said, *For as much as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: Thou therefore shalt be the Man.* Thou shalt be over my House; and all my People shall yield subjection to thee: *Only in the Throne will I be greater than thou.* Then giving him the *Ensigns* of Rule and Dignity then in use, as the taking off the *Ring* from his own hand, and putting it upon Joseph's, Arraying him in *Vestures of Silk*, and putting a *Chain of Gold* about his Neck, causing him to ride in the *second Chariot*, and ordering his *Heralds* to proclaim before him the word [*Abrech*] (a word of uncertain Signification, but rendred by some [*Tender Father,*] by others [*Bow the knee,*] in token of honour and subjection to him) he made him Ruler over all the Land of Egypt. And said to him, *See, I have set thee over all the Land of Egypt, and as I am King, No Man shall attempt any thing throughout all the Land, without thy Direction, or Order.* Then changing Joseph's Name, he called him *Zaphnath-paaneah*, which signifies a *Revealer of Secrets*, or one to whom *Secrets* are revealed: And he gave him to Wife *Asenath*, the Daughter of *Poti-pherah*, Prince of *On*, called also *Heliopolis*, or the City of the Sun.

Some take *Poti-pherah*, Joseph's Father-in-law, to have been *Priest* of *On*: But the Hebrew word signifying indifferently *Prince* or *Priest*, *Tremellius* and *Junius* render it *Prince*, both here and after in Chap. 47. 22. and 26. And give divers Reasons to prove it should be read *Princes*, not *Priests*. Some English Translations render it *Prince* in the Text; and set *Priest* in the Margin: And the last Translation, tho' it renders it *Priest* in the Text; yet sets *Prince*, and *Princes*, in the Margin.

Thirteen years had Joseph been a Bondman in Egypt (for he was sold thither in the Seventeenth, and was now come to the Thirtieth year of his Age:) When on a sudden the Lord advanced him, and set him *above his Mistress*, (who had falsely accused him,) *above his Master*, (who had wrongly imprisoned him,) *above the chief Butler* (who had been his Fellow Prisoner,) and *above every Man* in Egypt, except the King only.

And now the seven plenteous years beginning (in which the Earth brought forth in great abundance) Joseph set forward on his *Circuit*, and going throughout all the Land of Egypt, gathered up all the Food (which could be spared from present use) and laid it up in the Cities: Storing the Fruit of the Fields, which were round about every City, in the same City. And thus did he every year of those seven fruitful years: By which means he heaped up Corn as the Sands of the Sea; so very much, that he was fain to give over keeping account, for it was beyond number.

In this fruitful time, Joseph's Wife proved fruitful too, and bare him two Sons, before the years of Famine came. The Name of the eldest Son Joseph called *Manasseh*, that is, *Forgetting*: For God (said he) hath made me forget all my Toil, and all my Father's House. But the Name of the younger he called *Ephraim*, which signifies *Fruitful*: For (said he) God hath caused me to be fruitful in the Land of my Affliction.

No sooner were the seven years of *Plenty* ended, but the seven years of *Dearth* began to come; according as *Joseph*, expounding the Dream, had said. And it was a *general Dearth*; not only in *Egypt*, but in all the *neighbouring Countries*: Yet there was Food in all the Land of *Egypt*, by reason of the Stores that had been laid up. But when the *Famine* grew strong upon *Egypt*, and the *Egyptians* cried to *Pharaoh* for Bread, he sent them to *Joseph*, charging them to do as he should direct them. *Joseph* thereupon opening all the Store-houses, sold out Corn, not only to the *Egyptians*, but to those also that came out of other Countries to buy; because the *Famine* was sore in all those Parts. And to that degree did it encrease; that there was no Bread in all the Land, (save what *Joseph* had laid up:) So that the Land of *Egypt*, and all the Land of *Canaan* *fainted*, by reason of the *Famine*. Gen. 41.

Here in the course of time should come in the Story of *Joseph's* Brethren, their coming to buy Corn of him, with the various and strange Adventures that befel them; and *Jacob's* coming, with his Family, to settle in *Egypt*, related in *Chap.* 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, and part of 47. But that the Reader may have together the account of *Joseph's* Dealing with the *Egyptians*, I choose to postpone the Story of his Brethren, and go on to set forth the *Egyptian* Calamity, and *Joseph's* Conduct therein, as it is delivered in *Chap.* 47. from *Ver.* 13. to 27.

When *Joseph* had gathered up all the Money, that was found in the Land of *Egypt*, for the Corn which he had Sold to them, and had brought it into the King's *Exchequer*; the *Egyptians* coming to him, said, Give us Bread; now our Money is gone: For why should we die in thy Presence, who hast wherewith to keep us alive? But *Joseph* told them, if they had no more Money, they should bring him their Cattel; and he would give them Bread in exchange for their Cattel: Which they did; and for their Cattel he fed them that year. Gen. 47.

When that year was ended, they came to him again the next year; which is called the *Second* year, but must not be understood to be the *Second* of the *Seven*: But the *Second* from the time that their Money failed; which was indeed the *Sixth* of the *Seven*. And then they told him, they would not hide their Condition from him; how that their Money was spent, and he had got their Herds of Cattel already: So that they had nothing left now to offer him, but their Bodies, and their Lands. Therefore, Let us not die (said they:) Before thine Eyes, both we and our Land (for want of Seed to sow it) But buy us and our Land for Bread, and we and our Land will be Servants unto *Pharaoh*; and give us Seed, that we may live and not die, and that the Land be not desolate.

Joseph took them at their Word, and bought all the Land of *Egypt* for *Pharaoh*; Except the Land of the *Princes*, which he did not buy: For the *Princes* had a Portion allowed them by *Pharaoh*, and did eat the Portion which *Pharaoh* gave them: wherefore they did not sell their Lands. But the rest of the *Egyptians* sold every Man his Field, because the *Famine* prevailed over them: And so the Land became *Pharaoh's*.

Then said *Joseph* to the People, Behold, I have this Day bought both you and your Land for *Pharaoh*. Now here is Seed for you, and ye shall sow the Land; for this being the last year of the *Seven* barren years, they might sow in hopes of plenty again:) But, added he, These shall be the Terms on which ye shall hold your Land, Ye shall every year give the Fifth part of your encrease unto *Pharaoh*; and the other Four Parts shall be your own, for Seeding the Field again, and for Food for your selves, your little ones, and all them of your Households.

Thus

Gen. 47. Thus *Joseph* settled it for a standing Law, throughout all *Egypt*; that *Pharaoh* should have the Fifth part of the yearly encrease of all the Lands: Except the Lands of the Princes, which did not become *Pharaoh's*.

As for the common-People, *Joseph* removed them to Cities, from one end of the borders of *Egypt* to the other. Which probably he might do with this intent, that by so displacing, and unsettling them from their Ancient Seats and Demeasns, and shifting them to and fro, one upon another's Land, but leaving none upon their own, he might the better confirm *Pharaoh's* Title to the whole; when none should know where to claim.

Thus the *Egyptians* saved their Lives, at the Cost of losing their Estates and Liberties; and of Free-men, became Bond-men; of Freeholders, Tennants in Soccage, holding by the Plow, or Service in Husbandry. In which yet (so sweet was Life to them) they rejoiced, saying to *Joseph*, *Thou hast saved our Lives*: Let us find favour in the sight of my Lord, and we will be *Pharaoh's* Servants.

Thus it went with the *Egyptians*: The Account of which I thought would be most clear and acceptable, if it were thus given entirely together. Therefore I passed over the 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, and part of 47 Chapters (where the Story of *Joseph's* dealing with his Brethren, and *Jacob's* going down into *Egypt* is related;) that I might connect the latter part of the Account of *Joseph's* ordering the Affairs of *Egypt*, (which is delivered in Chap. 47. from ver. 12, to 27.) with the former part thereof. Which having done, let us now return, and see how in these hard times it fared with good *Jacob*, and his Family, in the Land of *Canaan*, for the Famine raged in *Canaan*, as well as in *Egypt*; and they were in worse Case who lived there, because there were not Stores laid up there, as there were in *Egypt*.

Gen. 42. When *Jacob* understood that there was Corn in *Egypt*, he said unto
A. M. his Sons, *Why do ye look one upon another? like dispirited Men, void of*
2298. *Counsel:*) *I hear there is Corn in Egypt; therefore get ye down thither, and buy for us from thence, that we may preserve our lives.*

Hereupon *Joseph's* Ten Brethren (leaving *Benjamin*, the youngest, with their Father *Jacob*, who would not part with him, lest *Mischief* might befall him) went down to *Egypt* to buy Corn. And *Joseph*, who was the Governour over the Land, not trusting to Deputies, but selling the Corn out himself to those that came to buy; his Brethren coming to treat with him for Corn, bowed down themselves before him, with their Faces towards the Earth: Thereby unwittingly beginning to fulfil what *Joseph* had before dreamed of them. *Joseph* no sooner saw his Brethren, but he knew them; tho' they did not know him. Wherefore remembring his Dream concerning them; and being minded to try what effect some hard Treatment would have upon them, to bring them to a Sense of their unnatural Dealing with him, using an Interpreter to avoid Suspicion; he roughly asked them, *Whence they came?* They answering, that they came from *Canaan* to buy Corn; he Replied, *Ye are Spies, and are come to see the Nakedness*, (that is the weak and unguarded parts) *of the Land*. They submissively answered, *Nay, my Lord, but to buy Food, are thy Servants come*. And to take off the Suspicion of their being Spies; they added, *We are all one Man's Sons: We are true Men, thy Servants are no Spies*. Thereby suggesting the Improbability of their being Spies being all Brethren, the Sons of one Man; since no Man in his right Wits, would send so many, and all his own Children, upon such a Capital Enterprize. But *Joseph*, repeating the Charge upon them, said, *Nay; but to see the Nakedness of the Land are ye come*.

This

This drew them, for clearing themselves, to open the state of their Family further, by saying, *Thy Servants were Twelve Brethren, the Gen. 42. Sons of one Man in the Land of Canaan; and behold the Youngest is this day with our Father: And one is dead.* Well, said *Joseph*, by this it shall appear whether ye are Spies, or no. Ye now say, Ye have a Younger Brother: And, by the Life of *Pharaoh*, ye shall not go from hence, except your Youngest Brother come hither. Therefore send one of you, and let him fetch your Brother; and ye shall be kept in Prison in the mean time, that your words may be proved, whether there be any Truth in you: Otherwise, By the Life of *Pharaoh*, (that is, as sure as *Pharaoh* lives,) Ye are Spies.

Some, from this Form of Speech, [By the Life of *Pharaoh*,] charge *Joseph* with having learn'd and used an Egyptian Oath. But Dr. Robert Sander son, in his Book *De Juramenti Obligatione*, Praelect. 5. Sect. 7. defends *Joseph* from having sworn, when he said to his Brethren, by the Life of *Pharaoh*.

Joseph, having told his Brethren what they must trust to, put them all together into Custody for three days: And on the third day coming to them again, he let them know that he feared God, and would not that their Families should suffer for their Faults, nor that they should suffer if they were faultless. Therefore, said he, this do: *If ye be true Men, let one of your Brethren be bound in the house of your Prison; and go ye, carry Corn, to prevent the famishing of your Families. But see that ye bring your youngest Brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and your lives preserved.* To this, not knowing otherwise how to help themselves, they all agreed. And thereupon falling into discourse amongst themselves, they could not but reflect on their evil Usage of their Brother *Joseph*, whom they all supposed to be dead. And they said one to another, *We are verily guilty concerning our Brother; in that tho' we saw the Anguish of his Soul, when he besought us, we would not hear: Therefore is this Distress come upon us.* Aye, said *Reuben*, did not I intreat you, that ye would not sin against the Child, and ye would not hear? Therefore behold, his Blood is now required.

Joseph was present, and heard their discourse: For having spoken to them by an Interpreter before (who now was absent) they spake freely one to another, as far from thinking he could understand them, as that he was their Brother. But these words of theirs so affected good *Joseph*, that he could not forbear Weeping: Which that his Brethren might not observe, he turned away, and left them for a little while. Then returning, and (by his Interpreter) communing further with them, he took *Simeon* (the eldest next to *Reuben*, whom he spared, because he not only consented not to their evil design against him, but saved his Life, and laboured to have delivered him) and causing him to be bound in their sight, he set the rest at liberty: Who having their Sacks, by his order, filled with Corn, and Provision given them for their Journey, laded their Asses, and departed.

But as one of them, when they came to their Inn upon the way, opened his Sack, to give his Ass Provender, he espied his Money in his Sack's Mouth (for *Joseph* had ordered his Steward to put every one of their Moneys into his Sack again.) At sight of this, he calls out to the rest, and tells them *his Money was restored.* This startled them all: Their Hearts began to fail, and Fear seizing on them, they said one to another, *What is this that God hath done unto us? For being conscious of their own guilt, they looked upon this as an additional Judgment of*

God upon them for it. Yet they knew not that every one of them had
Gen. 42. his Money returned, till they came home.

Being come to their Father, they gave him an Account of their Journey, and of what had befallen them in it; relating to him how the Lord of the Land had dealt with them, charging them with being Spies, engaging them to bring their youngest Brother with them (as a Proof of their Clearness) when they should come again, and keeping their Brother *Simeon* bound in Prison as a Pledge, till they should bring *Benjamin*.

This news was very displeasing to *Jacob*: But when upon the emptying of their Sacks, they found every Man's Bag of Money in his Sack, both *Jacob* and they were all afraid, lest some new Accusation would arise out of this, when the other, of their being Spies, should be cleared. *Jacob* therefore, breaking forth in Complaint, said, *Me have ye bereaved of my Children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not; and ye will take Benjamin away. All these things are against me.*

Reuben, thinking to persuade his Father to consent to *Benjamin's* going, desired him to commit him to his Care, promising to bring him safe to him again: Which, said he, if I do not, *slay thou my two Sons* (or two of my Sons; for he had four, Named in *Gen. 46. 9.* which went down afterwards with *Jacob* into *Egypt*.)

Jacob needed not be told how ill a recompence it would have been to him, for the loss of his Son, to kill his two Grandsons: So that this Proposal did but aggravate his grief, and make him resolve that his Son *Benjamin* should not go down with them. For, said he, *his Brother Joseph* (his only Brother by the Mother) *is dead*, (so he, and they all, thought) *and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.*

Gen. 43. Thus it stood a while with them. But the Famine increasing fore upon them, when they had eaten up the Corn which they had brought out of *Egypt*, *Jacob* said unto his Sons, *Go again, buy us a little Food*: Not taking any notice of the Injunction laid upon them in *Egypt*, to bring their Brother *Benjamin* with them, if they meant to have Corn, or their Brother *Simeon* back with them. The Sons well knew, 'twas in vain for them to go without *Benjamin*: And how to persuade their Father to part with him, was the difficulty.

Reuben had in vain tried his skill before; wherefore *Judah* now attempts to draw his Father to a compliance: And in order thereunto he thus bespake him.

If, said he, thou wilt send our Brother with us, we will go down and buy food: But if thou wilt not send him, *it is in vain for us to go* (so I wish it might be read, rather than in that blunt manner [*We will not go*] not so decent from a Son to a Father.) For (added he) *the Man did solemnly protest unto us that we should not see his face, except our Brother was with us.*

This pincht poor *Jacob* again, and drew from him a fresh complaint. Wherefore (said he) *dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the Man, whether ye had another Brother?* They, to excuse themselves, answered, (how truly doth not appear) *The Man asked us straitly of our state and of our Kindred; saying, Is your Father yet alive? Have ye another Brother?* And we answered him accordingly: *Could we certainly know before-hand that he would say, Bring your Brother down?*

Jacob beginning now to stagger, *Judah* fell in again, and said to him, *Send the Lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live and not die, both thou, and we, and our Little Ones. I will be surety for*

for him, and at my hand shalt thou require him : if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee ; then *let me bare the blame* forever.

Gen. 43.

What neither their *Reasons*, nor *Importunity* could effect, *Necessity* did. If there be no Remedy ; *If it must be so now* (said their Father to them) *do this. Take of the best Fruits of the Land in your vessels, and carry down the Man a Present ;* a little Balm (or Balsam) and a little Honey, Spices and Myrrh, Nuts and Almonds (which if any wonder they should be to be had in so great a Famine, let it be considered, that this was but the *second* year of the *seven* ; there were *five* yet to come, Gen. 45. 11. And these things not being used for common Food, there might some small quantity of the old Stock remain.) *Take with you also* (said he) *double Money in your hands* (for he considered well, that as the Famine increased, the Price of Corn would be likely to rise.) And, added he, *Carry with you again the Money that was brought back in the Mouths of your Sacks : For peradventure it was an Oversight.* Take also your Brother Benjamin with you ; and arise, go again unto the Man : And, (which shews where his Hope lay) *God Almighty give you Mercy before the Man* (or incline him to be merciful to you,) that he may send away your other Brother (Simeon) and Benjamin. And now having committed all to God, *If* (said he) *I be bereaved* (of my Children) *I am bereaved*. As if he had said, I'll trust Providence, and quietly submit to God's divine Disposal.

Now went they down *cheerfully* ; having their Brother Benjamin with them, the Money that was in their Sacks, to return it again, *double Money* to buy with, and a *Present* to appease the *angry* Governour : And now they reckoned they could appear, with some Confidence before him.

When they were come into Egypt, and Joseph saw his Brother Benjamin among them, he gave order to his Steward (the Ruler of his House) to bring them home, and make Provision for them to dine with him at Noon : Which the Steward accordingly did.

This put them into a *new Fright* ; and conferring together upon it, they concluded, that this was because of the Money that was returned in their Sacks before : And that therefore they were thus brought into the Governour's House, that he might seek an Occasion against them, to fall upon them, and both take them for Bond-men, and seize upon their Cattel. That therefore they might remove all Offence about the return of their Money, they drew near to the Steward, and communing with him *at the Door*, one of them (in the name of the rest) said, *O Sir, When we came at the first to buy Food, it came to pass, that when (in our return) we opened our Sacks* (one of us at our Inn, by the way, and the rest of us when we came home) *behold every Man's Money, in its full weight, was in the Mouth of his Sack : We cannot tell who put the Money in our Sacks ; but we have brought it again : And we have brought other Money also to buy Food with.* The Steward *cheered* them up, bidding them not fear ; and to hide still the *Contrivance* from them, told them, *Their God, and the God of their Father, had given them Treasure in their Sacks : For I* (said he) *had your Money.* And finding them somewhat dejected, he, to comfort them, brought forth their Brother Simeon to them ; and gave order that Water should be brought to them, to wash their Feet in : And that their Cattel should be taken care of, and fed.

They mean while, understanding they should dine there, made ready their *Present* against the Governour should come in : And when he came they presented him with it ; *bowing themselves to him to the Earth.* He asking them *how they did*, and if their Father (the old Man

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Man, of whom they had spoken, when they were with him before) was
 Gen. 43. yet alive, and well? They answered, *Thy Servant, our Father is yet alive, and in good health*; And thereupon again they bowed down their heads, and made Obeisance. In doing which, *Joseph*, no doubt, could not but observe (how inobservant soever they were) the Accomplishment of his first Dream (Gen. 37. 7.) wherein their Sheaves made Obeisance to his.

Then lifting up his Eyes (for his Affection would hardly suffer him to look stedfastly upon them) and seeing his Brother *Benjamin*, the Son of his own Mother, he asked, *Is this your younger Brother, of whom ye spake unto me?* And, not staying for an Answer from them, said to him, *God be gracious to thee my Son*: For his Bowels did so yern upon his Brother, that he was fain to hasten from them, that he might seek a Place to weep in. Retiring therefore into his Chamber, he wept there: And having thereby given some vent to his Passion, and washed his Face, that it might not be observed that he had wept, he came forth again to them; and refraining himself from further Tears, gave order that Dinner should be brought in.

Accordingly, Provision was made for him by himself (by reason of the Dignity of his Place;) and for all his Brethren by themselves: And for the Egyptians who were to dine in his Company, by themselves; because the Egyptians might not eat with the Hebrews, who were Shepherds, that being an Employment which the Egyptians did abominate, (Gen. 46. 34.)

All things being ready, the Brethren sat down in *Joseph's* Presence, according to the exact order of their Births: And they marvelled one at another. The reason of which their marvelling not being exprest, leaves it uncertain, whether they marvelled at the manner and order of the Entertainment; or whether (being placed, not by themselves, as some think, but by *Joseph* or his Servants by his appointment,) they marvelled how he came to understand the order of their Ages, to dispose them so rightly in their due Ranks. However, finding themselves kindly entertained (for *Joseph* sent them every one a Mess from his own Table, and to *Benjamin* a Mess five times as much as any of theirs) they drank freely, and were merry with him.

Gen. 44. Now might they think the Brunt was over; and that they should have no more Storms or Clouds, but pleasant Sun-shine for the future. But alas! the worst was yet behind; their sharpest Tryal yet to come. They, who were not enough sensible of the Affliction of *Joseph*; were not yet enough afflicted themselves: They must be afflicted more. Wherefore *Joseph* commanded his Steward to fill the Mens Sack's with Food, as much as they could carry; and put every Man's Money in his Sack's Mouth again: And (said he) Put my Cup, the Silver Cup, in the Sack's Mouth of the Youngest, with his Corn-money. Which accordingly was done; and early next Morning, by that time it was light, they were sent away. But they were not gone far out of the City, when *Joseph*, calling his Steward said to him, Up; follow after the Men, and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded Evil for Good? Is not this, (viz. The Cup which ye have stolen) that in which my Lord drinketh, and whereby he will certainly find out what ye are? Ye have done Evil in so doing.

The Steward, thus instructed, straitways pursued; And having overtaken them, charged them, as his Lord had bidden him. They knowing their clearness, made light of it, saying, Wherefore saith my Lord these Words? God forbid that thy servant should do such a thing. Then as an Argument of their Probity, and just Dealing, they reminded him

him of their having brought back the Money which they found in their Sacks. *Behold, said they, The Money, which we found in our Sacks Mouths, we brought back again unto thee, out of the Land of Canaan: How then is it likely we should steal out of thy Lord's House Silver or Gold? But to put the matter out of all doubt, in Confidence of their Innocency, they offered themselves to the Search, and that under the severest Penalties. With whomsoever of thy Servants it be found, said they, both let him die for it, and we also will all of us be my Lord's Bond-men.*

The Steward took them at their Word; but with this mitigation, *He with whom it is found shall be my Servant (said he) and the rest shall be blameless.* Then every one of them took down his Sack; and as they opened he searched them, beginning at the Eldest, and so going on to the youngest: And there, in poor Benjamin's Sack, the Cup was found.

This was a plain Conviction; at sight whereof Amazement and Sorrow took hold of them together: In Token of which, they rent their Cloaths, and seeing no Remedy, nor having any thing to say for themselves, they laded their Asses again, and returned to the City. Gen. 44.

Joseph mean while (who without a Cup could divine in whose Sack the Cup would be found) staid at home, expecting their Coming; and when Judah and his Brethren came into the House to him, they fell down before him on the Ground. But before they could open their Mouths to defend, or excuse themselves, Joseph sternly said to them, *What deed is this that ye have done? Wot ye not that such a Man as I could certainly find you out?*

Altho' they were altogether innocent of this Matter: Yet so great a Consternation and Fear was on them, that they knew not what Answer to make; till at length Judah thus abruptly brake forth.

What shall we say unto my Lord? What shall we speak? Or how shall we clear our selves? God hath found out the Iniquity of thy Servants: Behold we are my Lord's Servants; both we, and he also with whom the Cup is found.

Nay, said Joseph, God forbid that I should do so: The Man in whose hand the Cup is found, he shall be my Servant: But as for you, get ye up in peace unto your Father.

This Condescension gave Judah boldness to come near to him, and thus bespake him. *O my Lord! let thy Servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my Lord's Ears, and let not thine Anger burn against thy Servant. For thou art (as much to be feared) as Pharaoh.* Then repeating (and that more at large than was delivered before) the Discourse that had passed between him and them, when they came first to buy Corn, and between their Father and them at their return home, he Pethetically set forth the Sorrow their Father had undergone for the loss of his Son Joseph; the extream Affection he bare to his Son Benjamin, the Difficulty they had to prevail with their Father to trust his Benjamin with them, so that he himself was fain to become Surety to his Father, for the safe return of his Brother; and that in as much as his Father's Life was so bound up in the Life of the Lad, if their Father should see them come back without him, it would undoubtedly occasion his Death, and they should thereby be a means to bring down the gray Hairs of their Father with Sorrow to the Grave: He concluded his Speech with this Petition; *Now therefore, I pray thee, let me thy Servant (who have passed my word to my Father for his safe return) abide here a Bond-man to my Lord, instead of the Lad, and let the Lad go up with his Brethren. For how shall I go up to my Father, and the Lad be*
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not

not with me? Lest peradventure I see the Evil that shall come by that means upon my Father.

Gen. 45. So sensibly was Joseph touched with this moving Speech of Judah, that finding he could no longer contain himself, but that his Affection would inforce him to open himself unto his Brethren, he gave order that every one, but they, should go out of the Room from him. Which was no sooner done, and he left alone with them, but that breaking forth into loud Weeping, he said to his Brethren, *I am Joseph: Doth my Father yet live?*

The Name Joseph, with the sense of their own Guilt, and the Power he now had over them, to revenge (if he would) himself upon them, struck his Brethren with so great Terror and Confusion, that they could not answer him a word. Which he observing, spake to them again, in a kind Tone, saying, *Come near to me, I pray you: and being come near, he said to them, I am Joseph, your Brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.*

These last words, renewing the remembrance of their Injustice and Cruelty towards him, must needs pierce deep; where either Guilt let in Fear; or Repentance, Sorrow. Joseph therefore (sensible of the Hardship they were now under) in tenderness to his Brethren (who had shewed none to him) to soften the former Words, immediately added, *Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with your selves, that ye sold me hither: For God did send me before you, to preserve Life. For these two years hath the Famine been in the Land: And there are Five years yet to come; in the which there shall be neither Plowing nor Harvest. And God sent me before you, to preserve you a Posterity in the Earth, and to save your Lives by a great Deliverance. So now, added he, it was not ye, that sent me hither, but God.*

Thus did the good Man endeavour to ease them, by mitigating their Offence, while himself looked over, and beyond the Instruments to him who disposes all things for good to his. Not but that it was true enough which he told them; It was not they that sent him thither, but God. For they sold him to the Ishmaelites; who might have carried him whither they would, for all them. Nor did they then matter whither he was carried, or what became of him; so they could but get rid of him. But it was God that directed him thither, and by various Steps of Providence brought him to that Dignity and Power there, that he might be his Instrument in that great Work, of preserving the Family of the Faithful, and saving much People alive. And therefore, said Joseph, *He hath made me a Father to Pharaoh (by Counsel, Care, and providing for Pharaoh and his People; which are the Properties of a Father:)* And by that means he hath made me Lord of all his House, and a Ruler throughout all the Land of Egypt.

Having thus prepared them, he now proposes to them what he had all this while designed; the fetching of his Father, with the whole Family of Israel, from Canaan into Egypt. *Haste you, said he to his Brethren, and go up to my Father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy Son Joseph, God hath made me Lord of all Egypt: Come down unto me; tarry not. And thou shalt dwell in the Land of Goshen (which was the Fruitfullest Part of Egypt, especially for Pasturage; And the shortest Journey for him to make, as being nearest to Canaan:)* And thou shalt be near unto me, thou and thy Children, and thy Children's Children: and thy Flocks, and thy Herds, and all that thou hast. And there will I nourish thee (for there are Five Years of Famine yet to come) lest thou, and thy Household, and all that thou hast, come to Poverty.

And

And that no *Doubt* might arise, or remain in any of their Minds, whether he was indeed their Brother *Joseph*, he wished them to observe, that *Gen. 45.* he did not now speak to them by an *Interpreter*; as he had done before he discovered himself to them: For behold, said he, *your Eyes see, and the Eyes of my Brother Benjamin* (whom my Father will more especially regard) that it is *my Mouth* that speaketh unto you; so that ye may give my Father full Assurance, that I am alive. And ye shall tell my Father of all my Glory in Egypt; and of all that ye have seen: And then make haste, and bring down my Father hither.

Then falling upon his Brother *Benjamin's Neck*, he wept: And *Benjamin* wept upon his Neck. After which, as a *Seal of Pardon* of all former Offences, and a general *Amnesty* to the rest of his Brethren, he Kissed them all severally, and wept upon them. By which kind Carriage encouraged, they afterwards discoursed familiarly with him.

The Report of *Joseph's* Brethren being come, was soon made known to *Pharaoh*, whom it pleased well, and his Servants. Whereupon calling for *Joseph*, he bid him say unto his Brethren, this do; *Lade your Beasts, and go, get you into the Land of Canaan, and take your Father and your Households, and come unto me: And I will give you the Good of the Land of Egypt; and ye shall eat the Fat of the Land* (that is, the Fruits which the Richest Land produce.) Now (said he to *Joseph*) that thou hast my especial Command for it, bid them do this; *Take you Waggon's out of the Land of Egypt, for your little Ones, and for your Wives: And bring your Father, and come. And regard not your Stuff: For the good of all the Land of Egypt is yours.*

Joseph therefore, according to *Pharaoh's* Commandment, appointed them Waggon's: Furnishing them also with Provisions for the Way. And for a Present to his Father, he sent Ten Asses, laden with the good things of Egypt, and Ten She-asses laden with Corn, and other Provisions for him by the Way. And the more to cheer his Brethren, and confirm his Love unto them, he gave to each of them *Changes of Raiment*: But that he might signally distinguish his Brother *Benjamin* from the rest, he gave him *Three Hundred Pieces of Silver*, and Five *Changes of Raiment* (or Suits of Cloaths.) And fearing lest, in their Journey, they should enter into a *Debate*, who was most to be blamed for the Injury done to him; and by casting it each from himself upon others, should raise a Difference among themselves: He gave them this necessary Caution; *See that ye fall not out by the way.* After which, dismissing them, they departed out of Egypt, and came to their Father in the Land of Canaan. To whom, no doubt, they were very welcome, not only for the Provisions they brought for his Family, but because his Sons (*Simeon*, and more especially *Benjamin*) were come safe to him again.

But when they told their Father, *Joseph is yet alive*, and he is Governor over all the Land of Egypt; the good old Man had like to have died, through the opposite Workings of contrary Passions; invading Joy, and renewed Grief: For being on a sudden surprized with such unexpected News, his doubtful Heart divided between Hope and Fear, plainly fainted. For tho' his Natural Affection would prompt him to wish, and hope it might be true: Yet his Judgment would not quickly permit him to believe that it was, or could be true. Nor did they gain his full Assent, tho' they related to him the particular Discourses, which had passed between *Joseph* and them; until he saw the Waggon's, which *Joseph* had sent to carry him: And then the Spirit of *Jacob* their Father revived. Then he cried out, *It is enough; Joseph my Son is yet alive* (Tell me no more of the Dignity, Power, Riches, Honours he enjoys:

joys : He is alive, and that is enough :) *I will go and see him, before I die.*

Gen. 46.

Accordingly *Israel* took his Journey, with all that he had : And when he came to *Beer-sheba* (where the Lord had appeared to his Father *Isaac* and blessed him ; and where his Father had built an Altar, and worshipped the Lord, *Gen. 26. 23, 24, 25.*) there he offered *Sacrifices unto the God of his Father Isaac.* In doing which, it may well be supposed, he not only gave him *Thanks*, for the Preservation of his Son *Joseph*, and the safe Return of his other Sons ; but supplicated, and implored his Protection and Blessing upon him and his, in the Journey he had now undertaken.

Here God spake unto *Israel*, in the Visions of the Night ; calling, *Jacob, Jacob* : Who answering, *Here am I* ; the Lord said, *I am God, the God of thy Father. Fear not to go* (out of and from the Land of *Canaan*, which I have promised to thee, and to thy Seed for an Inheritance,) *down into Egypt* (a Country where thy Ancestors have been evilly intreated :) *For I will there make of thee a great Nation. I will go down with thee into Egypt, and I will also surely bring thee up again* (that is, thy Body to be buried, and thy Posterity to live in this Land :) *And Joseph shall put his hand upon thine Eyes*, (that is, shall close thy Eye-lids, when thou diest.) Whence *Jacob*, to his comfort, might infer, that he should have a *Natural*, not a *Violent* Death ; and that his Son *Joseph* should be with him when he died.

Strengthened by this divine Promise, *Jacob* left *Beer-sheba*, and pursued his Journey towards *Egypt* ; his Sons carrying both him, and their little Ones, with their Wives, in the Waggon which *Pharaoh* had sent to convey them. They took also with them their Cattel and their Goods, which they had gotten in the Land of *Canaan* ; and came into *Egypt*, *Jacob* and all his Seed with him : His Sons, and his Sons Sons ; his Daughters, and his Sons Daughters. So we read it, in a general way of speaking ; (such as *Sarah* used, when she said, Who would have said to *Abraham*, that *Sarah* should have given Children such ? *Gen. 21. 7.* who gave suck to but one Child, *Isaac* :) tho' strictly, *Jacob* had but one Daughter, *Dinah* ; and but one Grand-daughter, *Serah*, the Daughter of *Asher*, *Gen. 46. 15, 17.*

Of *Jacob's* Seed, which he brought with him into *Egypt*, the Names are particularly exprest in this Chapter from *ver. 8.* to *ver. 25.* And both here, and in *Deut. 10. 22.* are computed to be, in the whole Number, Threescore and Ten Persons. But because there is an *apparent Difference*, between the Account here given by *Moses*, and that which is given by *Stephen*, *Acts 7. 14.* The one reckoning the Number, *Seventy*, the other making it *Seventy five* : I suppose it will not be thought an *Unnecessary Digression*, if, making a little Stop here, I give the Reader, what a Learned Man, (*De Dieu*) has written for the reconciling that Difference. Whose words, as I find them in Latin, quoted by *Samuel Craock*, in his Apostolical History, *p. 39.* on *Acts 7. 14.* I will put in English, for the benefit of such, as do not read Latin.

' Interpreters (says he) have been much puzzled, to reconcile this place with that of *Gen. 46. 27.* and *Deut. 10. 22.* Where *Moses* mentions only *Seventy Souls*, of *Jacob's* House, that entred into *Egypt*. But the Difficulty will be small, if we say, that the Places are not Parallel. For *Moses* makes a Catalogue, in which, together with *Jacob*, his own Offspring only, they that came out of his Loins, are comprehended ; his Sons Wives being expressly excepted, *ver. 26.* For which Reason, not only they who actually went into *Egypt* with him, but *Joseph* also, with his two Sons, *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, altho' they

‘ they were already in *Egypt* before, are contained in the Number Seventy, because they, having sprung from *Jacob*’s Loins, and taking their *Gen. 46.*
 ‘ Original from the Land of *Canaan*, did live as strangers in *Egypt*, and
 ‘ therefore were justly to be reckoned, as if they had entred *Egypt* with
 ‘ *Jacob*. A special Reason also thereis, why *Hezron* and *Hamul*, the two
 ‘ Grandsons of *Judah* by *Phares*, are put into that Number, altho’
 ‘ they were born afterwards in *Egypt*, to wit, that they might supply
 ‘ the place of *Judah*’s two Sons, *Er* and *Onan*, who were dead before.
 ‘ But in *Stephen*’s Oration, he doth not set forth *Jacob*’s Genealogy;
 ‘ but declares who they were that *Joseph* called out of the Land of *Canaan*
 ‘ into *Egypt*. For he called more than sprang from *Jacob*’s Loins: And
 ‘ yet he did not call all those that sprang from *Jacob*’s Loins. There, in
 ‘ the first place, *Judah*’s two Grandsons, *Hezron* and *Hamul*, are to
 ‘ be shut out; and in the next place, *Joseph* with his two Sons. *Judah*’s
 ‘ Grandsons he could not call, because they were not yet born: Him-
 ‘ self and his Sons he could not call, because they lived in *Egypt* already.
 ‘ Those Five therefore, and then *Jacob* himself, whom *Stephen* menti-
 ‘ ons by himself, being set aside, there remain, of *Moses* his Number
 ‘ Seventy, but Sixty four; to wit, the Eleven Brethren, one Sister,
 ‘ *Dinah*, and two and fifty Children of the Brethren: To which if thou
 ‘ addest the Eleven Wives of the Eleven Brethren, whom *Joseph* must
 ‘ needs call together with their Husbands, and which belonged to the
 ‘ Kindred, thou hast all his Kindred in Threescore and fifteen Souls. Thus
 ‘ much for the clearing of this Doubt. Now let us return to our History.

When *Jacob* drew near the Confines of *Egypt*, he sent his Son *Judah*
 before him unto *Joseph*, to receive direction for going unto *Goshen*; and
 into the Land of *Goshen* they came. Upon notice whereof, *Joseph*, calling
 for his Chariot, went up to *Goshen*, to meet *Israel* his Father, and pre-
 senting himself there unto him, he fell on his Neck, and wept on his Neck
 for a good while. It does not appear by the Text, whether at this Con-
 gress, *Joseph* fell on *Jacob*’s Neck, or *Jacob* on *Joseph*’s. *Tremellius* and
Junius make *Jacob* to have fallen on *Joseph*’s Neck, which seems most
 likely, And that, after he had wept there a good while, he brake forth
 into that high Expression of Satisfaction and Joy; *Now let me die, since*
I have seen thy Face, because thou art yet alive.

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After these Endearments were somewhat over, *Joseph* proposed unto
 them, that he would go, and acquaint *Pharaoh*, with their being come;
 and would let him know, that they being Shepherds, and Dealers in
 Cattel, had brought their Flocks and their Herds, and all they had, with
 them: Instructing his Brethren withal, that when *Pharaoh* should call
 for them, and ask them what Occupation they were of, they should
 answer, *Thy Servants Trade hath been about Cattel, from our Youth even*
until now, both we and our Fathers; that so they might dwell in the
 Land of *Goshen*. For the *Egyptians* (he told them) did so abominate
 Shepherds, that they would not suffer them to dwell promiscuously
 amongst them.

Accordingly *Joseph* going to *Pharaoh*, acquainted him, that his Farher
 and his Brethren, with their Flocks and their Herds, and all that they *Gen. 47.*
 had, were come out of the Land of *Canaan*, and were in the Land of
Goshen: And having taken five of his Brethren with him, he presented
 them unto *Pharaoh*. Whom when *Pharaoh* had asked what was their
 Occupation? They answered, as *Joseph* had before instructed them, *Thy*
Servants are Shepherds; both we, and also our Fathers. Then added,
To sojourn in the Land are we come: For thy Servants have no Pasture
for their Flocks, because the Famine is sore in the Land of Canaan.
Now there fore (said they,) we pray thee, Let thy Servants dwell in the
Land of Goshen.

U

Pharaoh

Pharaoh thereupon, turning his Speech to Joseph, said, The Land of
Gen. 47. Egypt is before thee; and since thy Father and thy Brethren are come unto
thee, settle them in the best of the Land: in the Land of Goshen let
them dwell. And if thou knowest any Men of Activity amongst them;
then make them Rulers over my Cattel.

The way thus opened, *Joseph* brought in *Jacob* his Father, and having set him before *Pharaoh*, *Jacob* saluted *Pharaoh* (so both *Pagnine*, and *Tremellius* and *Junius* render the Place, and so it is Translated in 1 *Sam.* 13. 10.) And when *Pharaoh* asked him how Old he was? he, with a Circumlocution, answered, *The Days of the Years of my Pilgrimage are an Hundred and Thirty Years. Few, and Evil*, added he, (that is subject to many Troubles and Afflictions,) *have the Days of the Years of my Life been: And have not attained to the Days of the Years of the Life of my Fathers in the Days of their Pilgrimage.*

After a short Visit thus made, *Jacob* taking his leave of *Pharaoh*, went out from his Presence. And *Joseph* placed his Father and his Brethren in the Land of *Rameses*, which was the best of the Land of *Egypt*; where he gave them a Possession, as *Pharaoh* had commanded. And there he nourished his Father and his Brethren, and all his Father's Household; providing them Food, according to their Families, with that Care and Tenderneſs, as if they had been his Children.

Thus lived *Jacob* Seventeen Years in the Country of *Goshen*, in the Land of *Egypt*; and he, and his Family, having Possessions therein, grew and multiplied exceedingly. But when the time drew nigh that he must die, he called his Son *Joseph*, and said unto him, If now I have found Favour in thy sight, put, I pray thee thine Hand under my Thigh (which was then the Ceremony of an Oath) and deal kindly and truly with me. *Bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt: but I will lie with my Fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their Burying-place.* *Joseph* promised to do as he had directed him: But *Jacob* desirous of the fullest Assurance, pressed him to swear unto him; and *Joseph* willing to give his Father the utmost Satisfaction, did swear accordingly. Which done, *Israel* (leaning upon his Staff, *Heb.* 11. 21.) bowed himself in Token of Thankfulness to the Lord, for that, after all his other Mercies, he had now given him a fresh Assurance, by *Joseph's* Promise and Oath, that he should be carried out of *Egypt*, into the promised Land.

Gen. 48. It was not long after this, ere word was brought to *Joseph*, that his Father was Sick. Whereupon, taking with him his Two Sons, *Menasseh* and *Ephraim*, he went to visit his Father: Who being told that *Joseph* was coming, strengthened himself, and sat upon the Bed. And when *Joseph* was come to him, he recounted to *Joseph* the Promise which God had made to him of the Land of *Canaan*; which *Joseph* perhaps (being separated from his Father's Family while he was but a Boy might not before have heard of.) *God Almighty, said Jacob, appeared unto me, at Luz in the Land of Canaan, and blessed me; and said unto me, Behold, I will make thee Fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a Multitude of People: And I will give this Land to thy Seed after thee, for an everlasting Possession.*

Twice had God appeared to *Jacob* at this Place called *Luz*. First, when he fled from his Brother *Eſau*, and had that remarkable, and very significant Dream (or Vision) of the Ladder reaching from Earth to Heaven, *Gen.* 28. and had the Promise made unto him, and the Blessing now repeated by him. At which time he changed the Name of that Place, calling it (from that wonderful Appearance of God to him) *Beth-el*, the House of God; which Name it afterwards retained, when it grew into

into a City. And there did God appear to him again afterwards, at his Return from *Padan-aram*, *Gen.* 35. 1, and 7. and Renewed and Confirmed *Gen.* 48. unto him the Promise he had made to *Abraham*, to *Isaac*, and to himself before. And as *Jacob*, at that first time, gave the Place a new Name, *Beth-el*: So God, at this Second time, gave *Jacob* a new Name, *Israel*; thereby confirming the Angel's Word, *Gen.* 32. 28.

And after that *Jacob* had opened to *Joseph* the Promise made, of the Land of *Canaan*, to him and his Seed, or Posterity after him; he then proceeded to take *Joseph*'s two Sons into a peculiar Participation of this Promise. And now (said he to *Joseph*) thy two Sons *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* (for inverting the Order of their Birth, he set the younger first; of which he afterwards gave the Reason) which were born unto thee in the Land of *Egypt*, be fore I came unto thee into *Egypt*, are mine: not mine, as Grand-children only; but mine, as if they were my own immediate Offspring, begotten actually by my Self.) As *Reuben* and *Simeon*, they shall be mine. (So as to become each of them the Head of a distinct Tribe in *Israel*; and to enjoy the Privilege of Primogeniture, in Right of their Father *Joseph*, to whom the Birth-right was Transfer'd from *Reuben*, because of *Reuben*'s Transgression against his Father, *Gen.* 35. 22. and *Ch.* 49. 4. with *1 Chron.* 5. 1, 2.) But as for thy Issue, which thou begettest after them (or, if thou shalt beget any other after them) they shall be thine, and shall be called by the Name of their Brethren in their Inheritance. Then going on, he gave *Joseph* a brief Account of the Death and Burial of *Rachel* his Mother.

Hitherto, it seems, he had not taken notice, that *Joseph*'s Sons were with him; but had spoken of them as if they had been absent. But now, perceiving some body with him, tho' he could not well discern who (for his Eyes being dim with Age, he could not see so well, as at a distance to distinguish Persons; and the Lads, being young, stood between their Father's Knees,) he asked, *Who are these?* *Joseph* answered, *They are my Sons*. Which was a direct Answer to the Question; yet *Joseph*, not thinking it full enough, but having a Pious regard to God, as the Author of all Blessings, added, *Whom God hath given me in this Place*. *Jacob* thereupon saying, *Bring them, I pray thee unto me, and I will bless them*; *Joseph* brought them out from between his Knees: And bowing himself towards the Earth, set them near unto his Father. And *Jacob* kissing and embracing them, said to *Joseph*, in a Redundance of Joy; *I was out of hopes of seeing thy Face, and lo, God hath shewed me also thy Seed*.

Now *Joseph*, (probably having observed, that his Father in Naming them, had set *Ephraim* before *Manasseh*) ordered it so, when he brought them near to his Father, that by taking *Ephraim* in his right Hand, he put him towards his Father's left Hand: And taking *Manasseh* in his own left Hand, put him towards his Father's right Hand. But *Israel* stretching out his right Hand; laid it upon the Head of *Ephraim*, who was the Younger; and his left Hand upon *Manasseh*'s Head, guiding his Hands wittingly: For *Manasseh* was the First-born. And he blessed *Joseph* (in blessing his Children,) saying, *God, before whom my Fathers, Abraham and Isaac, did walk, the God which fed me all my Life long unto this Day, And the Angel, (Christ, who is called the Angel, or Messenger of the Covenant, Mal. 3. 1.) which redeemed me from all Evil, bless the Lads: And let my Name be Named on them, and the Name of my Fathers, Abraham and Isaac, (i. e.) let them be reckoned into our Family, equally with the rest of my Sons) and let them grow into a Multitude, in the midst of the Earth*.

It was not pleasing to *Joseph*, that his Father laid his *right Hand* (which carried with it the Preference and chief regard) on the Head of *Ephraim*. And supposing it to be done through Mistake, or Inadvertency, he held up his Father's Hand, to remove it from *Ephraim's* to *Manasseh's* Head; saying withal, *Not so, my Father, For this is the First-born; therefore put thy right Hand upon his Head.* But his Father (not acted by Humane Judgment or Affection, but by Divine Direction) refused, saying, *I know it, my Son, I know it. He also shall become a People, and he also shall be great: But truly his Younger Brother shall be greater than he; and his Seed shall become a Multitude of Nations.* Then adding to his former Blessing, he said; *In thee shall Israel Bless,* Saying, God make thee as *Ephraim*, and as *Manasseh*: Thus still setting *Ephraim* before *Manasseh*.

Then finding himself grow weaker, he said to *Joseph*, Behold, I die; (using the present time, to shew his Death was near at Hand;) but God shall be with you, and bring you again into the Land of your Fathers. Moreover, said he to *Joseph*, *I have given thee one Portion above thy Brethren, which I took out of the Hand of the Amorite, with my Sword and with my Bow.*

Since *Jacob* was so peaceable a Man, never (that we read of) engaged in any Martial Enterprize; it may be enquired how, and when he took this Portion of Land, which he here gave to *Joseph*, from the *Amorite*, with his Sword and his Bow, or by force of Arms. Some refer it to that Act of *Simeon* and *Levi*, (*Jacob's* Sons) in destroying the Inhabitants of *Shechem*, *Gen. 34.* And so the Annotators on that which (which if I mistake not) is called the Bishop's Bible, carry it. But that cannot be: For first, *Jacob* disavowed that Act, and blamed them for it, both then, and now, *Gen. 49. 5, 6, 7.* Secondly, those People of *Shechem*, whom they slew, were not *Amorites*, but *Hivites*, descended from *Hivi*, the Sixth Son of *Canaan*, *Gen. 10. 17.* Whereas the *Amorites* came from the Fourth Son of *Canaan*, *ver. 16.* Others take these Words of *Jacob* in a Prophetick Sense; Foretelling what (he, in) his Posterity should do: And thro' the Assurance of Faith looking upon it as done, undertook to dispose of a double Portion (the Appendant to the Birth-right to *Joseph*, on whom he had conferr'd the Birth-right) to be possessed by his Posterity.

Thus far the Discourse had passed in private, between *Jacob* and his Son *Joseph* only. But now perceiving his end to come on apace, he called his Sons in general together; that while he had Strength to deliver his Mind, he might take his Farewel of them: And not only distribute his Blessings amongst them; but foretel them also what should befall them, and their Offspring, in after times.

Gen. 49. Gather your selves together therefore, said he, and hear, ye Sons of *Jacob*, and hearken unto *Israel* your Father. And they being thereupon attentive, he directed his Speech to them severally; beginning thus to the Eldest.

Reuben, Thou art my First-born, my Might, and the Beginning of my Strength, the Excellency of Dignity, and the Excellency of Power. In which words he set before him, both what he was, and what he should have been, by the Privileges and Prerogatives he should have enjoyed, by his Birth-right, if he had not forfeited it and them. For being his Father's First-born, he was the Effect, or Product of his prime or chief Courage, and natural Strength in Procreation: And had he retained the Right of Primogeniture, he had excelled in Dignity, by Superiority over his Brethren: And in Power, from the double Portion of Inheritance, annexed

annexed in course to the Birth-right. But now, says he, *Unstable as Water, thou shalt not excel.* Since thou didst not retain thy first Statu- *Gen. 49.* on, but like Water didst fall down-wards, thou shalt not have the Privilege of Birth-right. And he adds the Reason, *Because thou wentest up to thy Father's Bed (Gen. 25. 22.) Then defiledst thou it.* And, as if he would appeal to the rest of his Sons for the Justice of this Sentence, he adds, *He went up to my Couch.*

Having done with Reuben, Simeon and Levi came next. Of whom, rather than to whom, he says, *Simeon and Levi are Brethren.* In a Natural Sense, so were the rest. Another Sense must therefore be sought. The Bishops Bible, by way of Supplement, reads it, *Brethren in Evil:* And I think, we need seek no further. The following words confirm this Sense, viz. *Instruments of Cruelty were in their Habitations. O my Soul, come not thou into their Secret; unto their Assembly, mine Honour, be not thou united: For in their Anger they slew a Man, (which by Synecdoche, is put for all the Inhabitants of Shechem;) and in their self-will they digged down a Wall destroying and spoiling the City.) Cursed be their Anger; for it was fierce: And their Wrath; for it was cruel.* Thus is their Offence set forth: Now follows their Doom. *I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.* This dividing may be applied to Simeon, whose Tribe had not a distinct Lot assigned them in Canaan, as the other Tribes had: But they were thrust within the Lot of Judah (*Josh. 19. 1.*) until, in the time of Hezekiah King of Judah, a Party of them smote the Remainder of Amalek, and Seating themselves in their Possessions (*1 Chron. 4. 42.*) were thereby divided from the rest of their own Tribe. As for the Tribe of Levi, it was scattered thro' all the Tribes; having no peculiar Lot or Share of the Land, as the other Tribes had.

Hitherto smooth Jacob, the cause so requiring, had been forced to speak roughly. But now that he comes to Judah, the good Man's stile is altered: And Judah's Name signifying Praise, leads him to praise Judah. Judah (said he) *Thou art he whom thy Brethren shall praise, (that is, for thy Strength and Valour: For) thy hand shall be in the Neck of thine Enemies (that is, when thou hast put them to flight, thou shalt pursue them, lay hold of them, and destroy them) Thy Father's Children shall bow down before thee.* Whereby, tho' the Birth-right was transferred from Reuben to Joseph, *1 Chron. 5. 1.* with respect to the double Portion: Yet that part or Branch of the Prerogative of Primogeniture, which concerned Authority or Government over the rest, is plainly conferred on Judah; and so it is explained there, *ver. 2.* For Judah prevailed above his Brethren, and of him came the chief Ruler; tho' the Birth-right was Joseph's, viz. with respect to the Inheritance.

So ravished was good Jacob in the Contemplation of Judah's Strength and Glory, that it made him break forth Rhetorically, and display it in elegant Figures. Judah, said he, *is a Lion's Whelp. From the Prey, my Son, thou art gone up. He stooped down; he couched as a Lion; and as an old Lion: Who shall (dare to) rouse him up?* then setting forth the Duration of his Government; The Scepter, said he, *shall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his Feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the People be.* And pursuing his Allegories, to set forth the Prosperity and Plenty of Judah's Tribe, and the abundant Fruitfulness of his Soil, he added, *Binding his Fole unto the Vine, and his Asses Colt unto the choice Vine, he washed his Garments in Wine, and his Cloaths in the Blood of Grapes.* As if Wine should be as plentiful and common with him, as Water.

And again, *His Eyes shall be Red with Wine: And his Teeth white with Milk.* As if he would raise an Emulation between the clustered Vineyard and fruitful Pastures, in Judah's Inheritance.

From Judah, still keeping in Leah's Line, he passes Issachar, and takes Zebulun; whose Name signifying Dwelling, he only says of him, *Zebulun shall dwell at the Haven of the Sea; and he shall be for an Haven of Ships: And his Border shall be unto Zidon.* Where accordingly his Lot came forth, *Josh. 19. 11.*

Then coming to Issachar, he says of him, *Issachar is a strong Ass, couching down between two Burdens: And he saw that Rest was good, and the Land that it was pleasant; and he bowed his Shoulder to bear, and became a Servant unto Tribute.* Whereby he fore-shewed that, tho' Issachar should be great and strong in People: Yet being Naturally dull, and loving Ease, they would choose rather to suffer themselves to be imposed upon by others, so they might peaceably enjoy their Fruitful and Pleasant Soil; than by taking Arms to vindicate themselves, disturb their own quiet.

Having gone through Leah's Offspring, he takes the Hand-maids Sons next; beginning with Dan of Bilhah, Rachel's Maid. Dan signifies Judging. And Dan (said he) shall judge his People, as one of the Tribes of Israel. This was fulfilled in Samson: Yet was no more than Issachar did by Tola, *Judg. 10. 1.* But it is supposed, the Reason why this was said of Dan, was to shew, that the Sons of the Hand-maids, (of which, Dan is the first named) tho' being born of Bond-women, they were in that respect inferior to the rest of their Brethren, should notwithstanding obtain some share in the Government. But he has this peculiar of Dan, that *Dan shall be a Serpent by the way, an Adder in the Path, that biteth the Horse's Heels, so that his Rider shall fall backwards.* By which he seems to intimate, that the Danites should prevail more by Policy and Stratagem, than by open War, and plain Force. Which Samson's dealing with the Philistines, *Judg. 14. and 15 chapters*, and the Danites taking Laish, *chap. 18.* confirms. But doubtless something more than ordinary imprest good Jacob's Spirit at this time; which made him now cry out, *I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord.* Might he not have some Sense, and Foresight of the Mischief the Danites afterwards brought upon themselves, when having rifled Micah's House, and robb'd him of his Gods, they fell into open Idolatry, *Judg. 18.*

Of Gad, alluding also to his Name, he said, *A Troop shall overcome him: But he shall overcome at the last.* By which he is thought to have referred, to what was afterwards performed by Jephthah, of that Tribe, *Judg. 11.*

Of happy Asher he said, *His Bread shall be fat, and he shall yield Royal Dainties.* To much like purpose Moses afterwards said of him, *Let him dip his Foot in Oyl,* (*Deut. 33. 24.*) each referring to the exuberant Richness of his Soil.

Naphtali, said he, *is an Hind let loose: He giveth goodly Words.* By an Hind let loose, some think is meant, a ready aptness to wage War, and nimbleness to pursue Enemies. But since the Property of an Hind is not to pursue, but to fly; it seems rather to imply a Promptitude and Dexterity in escaping Dangers: To which the other part of the Sentence [*He giveth goodly Words,*] agree well, intimating that he will rather, by Deprecation appease, than, by Arms, Provoke an Adversary. And therein he seems most like his Father, who so appeased his angry Brother Esau, *Gen. 32, and 33 chap.*

He is now come to Joseph: Of whom, and to whom he speaks, as if he could hardly say enough, or high enough. Joseph, says he, *is a fruitful*

fruitful Bough, a Fruitful Bough by a Well : whose Branches run over the Wall. By which Rhetorical Amplifications, he sets forth the Strength of *Gen. 49.* *Josep's Family*, and the large extent of his Two-fold Tribe, *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* (the two Branches that run over the Wall) which, at the first, numbring of the Tribes, yielded of Men able to go forth to War, Threescore and Twelve Thousand, and Seven Hundred, (*Numb. 1.*) And at the Second Numbring, Fourscore and Five Thousand and Two Hundred (*Numb. 26.*) far exceeding any other Tribe.

Having set forth his future greatness in his Posterity, he looked back, and remembered his past Troubles. *The Archers* (said he) *have sorely grieved him, and shot at him; and hated him.* Amongst these Archers, his Brethren may undoubtedly claim the first Place: For they are expressly said to have hated him (*Gen. 37. 4.*) and to have encreased their Hatred to him (*v. 5. and 8.*) to have conspired his Death (*v. 18.*) and afterwards to have sold him (*v. 28.*) Next to them his *lewd Mistress*, (and by her means) his *jealous Master Potiphar*, may be ranked amongst these Archers, that sorely grieved him. But *his Bow* (said *Jacob*, continuing the Metaphor) *abode in Strength, and the Arms of his Hands* (the Hands of his Arms, says another Translation; and why not his Arms and Hands?) *were made strong, by the Hands* (speaking after the manner of Men) *of the mighty God of Jacob: From thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel.* So the last English Translation has it, making the Shepherd and Stone Synonymous. The Bishop's Bible reads it, of whom was the Feeder appointed by the Stone of Israel; taking the Stone to be Christ, and the Shepherd or Feeder, appointed by him, to be *Joseph*. *Pagnine* turns it, *Pascens Lapidem*, Feeding the Stone. But *Tremellius* and *Junius* make *Joseph* to be both the Shepherd and Stone, viz. of Refuge to Israel. There is an Ellipsis, or Defect, in the Sentence; which Interpreters supply, as they think best. However it be taken, undoubtedly *Jacob* had regard, in the Passage, as to *Joseph's* constant resisting the Assaults of his Mistress, and Manfully bearing the Severity of his Master: So also to his taking care of, and feeding both *Israel*, the *Egyptians*, and others, as a Shepherd provides for his Flock. To which Condition and Capacity he was advanced by the God (said *Jacob* to him) *of thy Father, who shall help thee* (to go through the good work thou art engaged in,) *and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with the Blessings of Heaven above, Blessings of the Deep that lieth under, Blessings of the Breasts, and of the Womb.* (Terms comprehensive of all outward Blessings.) Then adding, *The Blessings of thy Father have prevailed above the Blessings of my Progenitors, unto the utmost Bound of the Everlasting Hills; he heaps them all on Joseph, saying, They shall be on the Head of Joseph, and on the Crown of the Head of him that was separate from his Brethren: which Joseph was.*

Having done with *Joseph*, there remained only *Benjamin*, the younger, of whom he said, *Benjamin shall raven as a Wolf: In the Morning he shall devour the Prey, and at Night he shall divide the Spoil.* Whereby he briefly, but aptly set forth the fierce and cruel Nature of that Tribe; made good amongst other Instances, in that of the *Levite's Concubine*; whose Story is in *Judges, 19, 20, 21.*

When *Jacob* had thus spoken to his Sons, and blessed them every one, (not according to his own Natural Affection or Inclination, but according to the Divine Direction given him:) he put them again in mind of his Death, saying, *I am to be gathered unto my People; and then he gave them this Charge, Bury me with my Fathers, in the Cave that is in the Field of Ephron the Hittite.* Which, that they might not mistake, he

Gen. 49. he further describes thus, *In the Cave that is in the Field of Machpelah; which is before Mamre in the Land of Canaan; which Abraham bought with the Field, of Ephron the Hittite, for a Possession of a Burying-place. And to engage them the more to do it, he tells them, There Abraham and Sarah his Wife were Buried; there Isaac and Rebekah his Wife were Buried: And there, added he, I Buried Leah. (Of which Two Women, Rebekah and Leah, no mention was before, with respect to either Death or Burial.) And to assure them of their Right to that Burying-place, he tells them further, The Purchase of the Field, and of the Cave that is therein, was from (not Ephron only, but) the Children of Heth.*

A. M. 2315. Now when Jacob had made an end of Commanding his Sons (about his Burial) he gathered up his Feet into the Bed (a Posture denoting Ease, and quiet Rest) and yielding up the Ghost, was gathered unto his People.

Gen. 50. But Pious Joseph could not part with so good a Father, without giving the utmost Demonstrations of Filial Affection and Duty. Wherefore falling upon his Father's Face, he wept upon him, and kissed him: And having thereby given some vent unto his Passion, he commanded his Servants the Physicians to Embalm him; which accordingly they did.

This being the first mention we have in Story, of embalming the Dead, may well countenance a Supposition, that the Israelites here learning it of the Egyptians, and practising it afterwards on great and solemn Occasions, amongst themselves, as in 2 Chron. 16. 14. and Job. 19. 40.) it might from them come into use among Christians.

After the Set time for Solemn Mourning was over (which it seems, for Persons embalmed, was Forty Days; but the Egyptians, to shew their respect to Joseph, mourned for him Seventy Days :) Joseph entreated some of Pharaoh's Courtiers, (for Mourners might not come into the King's Presence) to acquaint him that his Father, just before his Death, had made him Swear, that he would bury him in the Grave that he had digged for himself, in the Land of Canaan; and therefore to beg leave of Pharaoh, for him to go and bury his Father, under Promise to come again. Pharaoh forthwith granted his Request; bidding him (by the Messengers) Go up, and bury his Father, according as he had made him Swear.

Leave thus obtained, Joseph set forward to his Father's Burial; and with him went up (to honour Joseph, and grace the Funeral) the chief Servants of Pharaoh, the Elders of his House, and all the Elders of the Land of Egypt; and all the House of Joseph, and his Brethren, and his Father's Family: Only their Little Ones, and their Flocks, and their Herds, they left in the Land of Goshen; And there went up with him both Chariots and Horsemen in a very great Company.

Being come to a Place called the Threshing-floor of Atad, they there made a stand; and Joseph made a solemn Mourning for his Father Seven Days together. And they mourned there with so great and very fore Lamentation, that the Canaanites who inhabited the Land, observing it, said, This is a grievous Mourning to the Egyptians: From whence the Name of that Place was called Abel-mizraim; that is, the Mourning of the Egyptians.

This Solemn Mourning ended, they went on; and being come to the Field of Machpelah, which Abraham had bought for a Possession of a Burying-place, of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre, they buried Jacob in the Cave there. And having performed their Father's Command, they all returned into Egypt.

While

While *Jacob* lived, *Joseph's* Brethren thought themselves *safe*, having him their *Advocate*: But now that their Father was gone, their *Gen. 50.* Guilt renewed their *Fear*. And as they knew they had given *Joseph* cause enough: So (judging of him by themselves) they concluded he would certainly now *requite* them all the Evil they had done unto him. Wherefore, to *deprecate* their Offence, and procure Favour, they consulted together; and having framed a Message in their Father's Name, (whose Memory they well knew *Joseph* did most affectionately reverence) they sent a Messenger with it to him, in these Words.

Thy Father did command, before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph; Forgive, I pray thee now, the Trespas of thy Brethren, and their Sin: For they did Evil unto thee. And having thus smoothed their way, they add their own Petition thus; *And now, we pray thee, forgive the Trespas of the Servants of the God of thy Father.* Wherein with great Art, they made use of the most moving Arguments; the supposed Request of his Dying Father, that he would forgive them, not only as they were *his Brethren*, his Flesh and his Blood: but such also as profess to worship the *same God*, that both he and his Father Worshipped.

Joseph could not forbear to weep, when this Message was delivered to him: Partly perhaps from the renewed Remembrance of the thing; and more for the Ill Opinion, and Diffidence his Brethren had of him. But when they, having by this soft'ning Message prepared him, came themselves, and falling down before his Face, said, *Behold, we are thy Servants*: He bid them *not fear*. For, said he, *Am I in the Place of God* (to whom Vengeance belongs) *that I should avenge my Self?* As for you (added he) *I know ye thought Evil against me: But God meant it unto Good; that I might be an Instrument, under him, to save much People alive, and you especially, as it now appears.* Then comforting them, and speaking kindly to them, he said, *Now therefore, fear ye not any hurt from me: For I will be so far from revenging my self upon you, that I will nourish both you and your little Ones.*

Broughton sets *Jacob's* Death in the Six and Fiftieth year of *Joseph's* Life; who living Four and Fifty years after, saw both his Great Grand Children by his Son *Manasseh*, and the Children of *Ephraim* to the third Generation: For *Ephraim*, according to *Jacob's* Prophecy, *Gen. 48. 19.* increased faster than *Manasseh*.

But when *Joseph* found his Death drew near, he called his Brethren, (by which I do not understand the other Eleven Sons of *Jacob*, who, except *Benjamin*, being all Older than himself, might probably be all, or most of them dead; but) the Heads of their Families, and his own Sons: (For, in Scripture Dialect, all near Kinsmen go under the general Appellation of Brethren, as *Abraham* called *Lot*, *Gen. 13. 8.* See also *Chap. 24. 27.*) And he said unto them, *I die* (or my Death is at hand,) *and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this Land, unto the Land which he sware* (that is, gave and confirmed by Oath) *unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.* And *Joseph* took an Oath of the Children of *Israel*, that when God should visit them (as he certainly would) and should bring them out of that Land, *they should carry up his Bones from thence with them.* Then being an Hundred and Ten years Old, he died; and being Embalmed, was put in a Coffin in Egypt.

A. M.
2369.

The End of the Book of Genesis.

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T H E
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ALTHO' *Moses*, intent to deliver the History of *Jacob's* Family intire, and for that reason unwilling to cut the Thread of that Discourse, hath cast back the Story of *Job* (of which also he is by some supposed to be the Writer;) that he might, in an uninterrupted Series, set forth the Account of the *Israelites* Servitude in *Egypt*, and Deliverance out of *Egypt*: Yet since there is good ground to conclude, that *Job* lived between *Jacob* and *Moses*, in the time that *Israel* was in *Egypt*; I chuse rather, leaving *Joseph* at rest in his Coffin, and the *Israelites* restless under their Burdens, (which, after *Joseph's* Death, quickly fell upon them) to insert the Story of *Job* in this place, than to bring it in so far out of its due Course of time, as the Compilers of the Bible have set it.

Who *Job* was, is not agreed. Some would have him to have descended from *Nabor*, the Son of *Terah* and Brother of *Abraham*: induced perhaps so to think, from *Us*, the Name of the Land in which he dwelt; which they suppose to have been inhabited by *Nabor's* Sons, the Eldest of which was named *Huz*, Gen. 22. 21. But since *Shem* had a Grandson named *Uz*, Gen. 23. long before *Nabor* was born, why might not that Land take Name from him, as well as from *Nabor's* Son?

Others take him to be *Jobab*, the Son of *Zerah*, the Son of *Reuel*, the Son of *Esau*, by *Bashemath* the Daughter of *Ishmael*. But he cannot be *Jobab* (says *Broughton*, in his *Consent of Script. ad an. mund. 2430.*) for he [*Jobab*] died some Ages before *Moses* was King in *Israel*.

Others hold him to have sprung from *Abraham* by *Keturah*: Which is most likely. *Broughton* (*ubi supra*) is positive: *Job* (says he) is of *Abraham* by *Keturah*. He is said to be the greatest, for Riches, of all the Men of the East, Job 1. 3. into which Country *Abraham* sent his
Sons

Job. Sons by *Keturah*, Gen. 25. 6. And amongst the Children of the *East* are reckoned the *Midianites*, Judg. 6. 3. descended from *Midian*, one of *Abraham's* Sons by *Keturah*, Gen. 25. 2.

From the Uncertainty who *Job* was, some have taken the Liberty to question, *Whether he was at all?* Whether, in point of Fact, it be strictly true, that there was such a Man, named *Job*, who underwent those Tryals and Sufferings, which in this Book are recorded of him? Or whether it was only an Instructive and Parabolical Poem, devised and composed by some of the devout Antients, on purpose to instil into the Reader those Excellent Principles delivered in it. But besides other Arguments that might be urged, to prove the Reality of the Story, drawn from the Names of Persons, People, Countries, and from particular Passages therein mentioned; the Credit given to it by God (through his Prophet *Ezekiel* (ch. 4. v. 14.) and his Apostle *James* (ch. 5. v. 11.) in citing it, and refering to it, is enough, I think, to gain Belief with all, who have a due Regard for those Writings, That it is a real History.

Whoever, he was, That he lived before the Law, may be gathered from his offering Burnt-Offerings, with Acceptance and Commendation, in the Land of *Uz*, where he lived; which by the Law were forbidden to be offered in any other Place, than that which the Lord should chuse in some one of the Tribes of *Israel*, Deut. 12. 13, 14.

That he lived after *Jacob*, may be inferred from the Character given him by God (*Job* 1. 8. and ch. 2. 3.) That there was none like him in the Earth, for Uprightness and Fear of God. Which high Encomium may not be allowed to any (much less a Gentile) while *Jacob* lived; who was the Darling of God, descended from the Father of the Faithful, the peculiar Friend of God, *Abraham*, in a direct Line, of the Promised Seed, *Isaac*; Nor well, while *Joseph* lived.

Tho' the exact time of his Birth cannot, with sufficient ground, be ascertained: Yet there is a pretty general Concurrence in Opinion, that he lived in the time of *Israel's* Bondage in *Egypt*. And some Chronologers have adventured to place his Birth in the same Year, in which *Jacob* went down into *Egypt*; and to date the beginning of his Tryals in the Year that *Joseph* died, being the Seventy first of *Job's* Life; and set *Job's* Death in the second Year after *Israel's* Departure out of *Egypt*, of his Age the Two Hundred and Seventeenth: So allowing him Seventy Years before his Tryal, Seven Years in them, and an Hundred and Forty Years after them, according to *Job* 42. 16.

But I should think it less liable to Exception, if *Job's* Birth were set a little lower, as about the time of *Jacob's* Death: And then *Joseph*, who survived his Father some Fifty and four Years, will have been dead about sixteen Years, before that extraordinary Character was given of *Job*, in the seventieth Year of his Age. At which time he might well, for ought appears, be without Competitor or Equal. And there being somewhat more than Sixty Years, between *Joseph's* Death and *Moses* his Birth, the Story of *Job* may fitly enough fall within that Interval of time.

The Book of *Job* (says *Broughton*, *ubi supra*) tho' it was written after *Moses* his Death (Others think, by *Moses*) yet in order of time, falleth out before *Exodus*. And the whole Book, he says, is a Divine Commentary on *Genesis*. So that there cannot reasonably be expected from it any great store of Historical Observations.

As to the Stile wherein it is written, *Hierom*, in his Prologue to it, says, From the beginning of the Book to the first Words of *Job* (ch. 3. 3.) it is in the Hebrew, written in Prose. From thence, to those last Words

Words we have of *Job* [*Wherefore I abhor my self, and repent in Dust and Ashes*] (ch. 42. 6.) it is written in *Hexameter Verse*. And from thence to the End of the Book in *Prose* again. *Job.*

Job is adorned with an excellent Character, given him by God himself; That he was a *Perfect* and an *Upright Man*: And to shew what was meant by that, it is added, *One that feared God, and eschewed* (that is, *shunned*) *Evil*, ch. 1. 1.

His Condition in the World is set forth, both in *General*, and in *Particulars*. In *General*, That he was the *greatest* of all the Men of the *East*. In *Particulars*, that he had *Seven Thousand Sheep*; and *Three Thousand Camels*; and *Five Hundred Yoke of Oxen*; and *Five Hundred She-Asles*, v. 3.

For Children, he had *Seven Sons*, and *Three Daughters*, v. 2. not like himself, but given to *Worldly Pleasures*. And being grown up, and removed from him, they took their Turns to *Feast from House to House*, every one his Day, and invited their Sisters to feast with them, v. 4. But when they had gone their round, good *Job*, considering the Danger that attends such *jolly Doings*; and fearing lest his Children, in their *Merriments*, should have *sinned*, and spoken or thought *irreverently* of God, sent and sanctified them, and rising up early in the Morning, he offered *Burnt-offerings* for them, according to the Number of them all. And thus he did from time to time, after their *Revelling Feasts*, v. 5.

This *pious* Care of good *Job*, rendered him *very dear* to God, and caused God to set a more than *ordinary Value* on him: Inasmuch that when afterwards the Sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord (as we read they did, *Job* 1. 6.) and *Satan* (the *Adversary*, for so the Word signifies) came also among them, to see what *Mischief* he could do unto them; God, to set forth *Job*, as an exemplary Pattern of *Vertue* and *Righteousness*, said to *Satan*, *Hast thou considered my Servant Job, that there is none like him in the Earth* (which thou hast been compassing, and walking to and fro in) a *Perfect* and an *Upright Man*, one that feareth God, and escheweth or shunneth *Evil*.

The malignant *Adversary*, not willing to acknowledge that *Job* served God from a right Religious Principle, but for *Self-ends*, answered, *Doth Job serve God for nought? Hast not thou made an Hedge about him, and about his House, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the Work of his Hands, and his Substance is increased in the Land*, (as if he had said, Thou hast made him rich, and dost protect him from all Trouble and Danger:) *But put forth thy Hand now, and touch* (so as to destroy) *all that he hath, and see if he do not Curse thee to thy Face*, ver. 9, 10, 11.

God knew the Integrity of *Job*: And that the Exercise thereof might redound to his Honour, and turn to the good Example of others, he exposed him to the Tryal. Behold, said the Lord to *Satan*, *all that he hath, is in thy Power: Only upon himself put not forth thy hand*, ver. 12.

Hence it appears, that *Satan* hath no Power over them that truly fear God, till he permit it him. But now, having got this Permission, he, (who goes about, like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8.) needed no Spur. Away goes he, and stirs up his *Evil Agents* to ruin good *Job*.

It was not long ere *Job's* Children were all got together, Feasting and making Merry, at his Eldest Son's House, ver. 13. That time took *Satan* to begin with *Job*. He had in readiness stirr'd up the *Sabeans*, (a Neighbouring People, descended from *Sheba*, Grandson of *Abraham*

Job. by *Keturah*, Gen. 25. 3.) to make an Inroad upon *Job* for Booty : Which they did, whereupon a Messenger came to *Job*, and said, *The Oxen were plowing, and the Asses feeding beside them; and the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; and moreover they have slain the Servants with the edge of the Sword; and I only am escaped alone, to tell thee, ver. 14, 15.*

Tho' this must be a very great Loss, to lose a *Thousand Oxen and Five Hundred Asses* at once; yet this might look but like a *common Depredation*, which might befall any one, that lived within the reach of such *Free-booters* : And so might not be taken by *Job*, for a *Judgment* from God upon him; which *Satan* knew would be the thing that would most *sensibly touch* him : Wherefore, he (who is called the Prince of the Power of the Air, *Ephes.* 2. 2. and who, thro' his *Beastly Instrument*, is said to have afterward made *Fire to come down from Heaven, upon the Earth*, in the Sight of Men, *Rev.* 13. 13.) by raising *Coruscations*, or fiery *Flashes* in the Air, destroyed *Job's Sheep*. Whereupon, while the first Messenger was telling the *Evil Tidings* of the *Sabeian Plunder*, Another came to *Job*, and said, *The Fire of God is fallen from Heaven, and hath burnt up the Sheep and the Servants, and consumed them, and I only am escaped alone to tell thee, ver. 16.*

While he was yet speaking, steps in a *Third*, and says, *The Chaldeans made out Three Bands, and fell upon the Camels; and have carried them away : Yea, and slain the Servants with the edge of the Sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee, v. 17.*

Thus was *Job* stript of all his Substance in one Day; and he that in the Morning was the *Richest Man* in all the *East*, was ere Night perhaps the *Poorest Man* in all the *World* : Yet did not all these Losses draw a *Murmur* from good *Job*.

Satan probably, from the *calm Temper* wherewith *Job* received the first of these Messages, might perceive that these Strokes were *too remote*, to raise that Passion he desired in *Job* : He therefore resolved to strike *Job* in a more *sensible Part*; and to come as near him, as the Bound set him would permit. This *Prince of the Air* therefore, raising a very great *Tempest* of Wind, threw down the House, wherein *Job's Children* were then Feasting, upon their Heads; and with the Fall thereof slew them all. And that *Job* might have no Respite, or Time to digest the Grief of his former Losses; before the *last Messenger* had made an end of relating to him the Loss of his Camels, Another *rushes* in and says, *Thy Sons and thy Daughters were Eating and Drinking Wine in their Eldest Brother's House, and behold there came a great Wind from the Wilderness, and smote the Four Corners of the House : And it fell upon the young Men (Which, from the Dignity of the Masculine Gender, comprehends both Sexes) and they are Dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee, v. 18, 19.*

This Stroke reached *Job* indeed, and *sensibly touched* him, both in his *Nature*, and in his *Judgment*. His *Nature* was wounded in the Death of his Children; His *Judgment* was troubled at the *Manner*, and *Circumstances* of their Death; considering how *ill-employed* Death found them, how *un-prepared* they were to die. Yet did not *Job*, now that they were dead, offer *Burnt-offerings*, or make *Expiations* for them, as before he used to do, after their Feastings, while they were alive. He knew, no doubt, that *in the Place where the Tree falleth, there it shall be*, *Eccles.* 11. 3. And that where Death leaves, *Judgment* will find.

But tho' *Job's Grief* was doubtless very great, yet did it not transport him into any violent or Irregular Passion. For it is said, *He arose,*
and

and Rent his Mantle, and shaved his Head, and fell down upon the Ground, and worshipped. Rending the Mantle, and shaving the Head, were outward Tokens of Affliction and great Sorrow, much used in those Eastern Countries, and early Ages of the World. And as the Shaving of the Head, being a Deliberate Act, shews it was not the effect of a sudden or rash Resentment : So his falling down upon the Ground, and Worshipping, shews he received these Afflictions with an humble *submissive* Mind, bowing (under them) to the Hand of the Lord, without whose (at least) Permission, he well knew, none of these things could have befallen him, v. 20.

Job.

Now watched Satan, in hopes that Job would have broken forth into some *intemperate*, and *indecent* Speech against God : When to his great Disappointment, Job only said, *Naked came I out of my Mother's Womb, and Naked shall I return to the Earth*, (the common Womb, or Mother of Mankind) *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away : Blessed be the Name of the Lord*, v. 21.

In all this, Job sinned not, nor charged God with Folly, v. 22. for he acknowledged, that he never had any thing, but what he received from God, That if it had not been taken from him, he must in a while have left it, and gone as Naked out of the World, as he came into it : That it was but Just, that he who gave, should have Power, when he pleased, to take back what he had given. And lastly, instead of *Curfing God to his Face*, which Satan had Suggested he would do ; he blessed God for what had befallen him : And thereby proved Satan a *Liar to his Face*. But Satan would be even with him for this.

For it was not long ere this restless Adversary, wanting more Work, and presenting himself before the Lord, when the Sons of God came to present themselves, (a Form of Speech, not strictly proper to God and Spirits, but Metaphorically accommodated to the weakness of Man's Capacity) the Lord proposed Job again to him, as an *Instance* of a *Perfect* and an *Upright* Man, that feared God, and shunned Evil : And still (said he) *he holdeth fast his Integrity, altho' thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause*, O ! said Satan, *Skin for Skin ; yea, all that a Man hath, will he give for his Life*. As if he had said ; Thou hast hitherto suffered me to touch him, but at a *distance* : I have not yet come so near as his *Skin* ; so that he has yet felt nothing in his *own Person*. But put forth thine Hand now, and touch his *Bone* and his *Flesh* ; and he will Curse thee to thy Face, Ch. 2. v. 3, 4, 5.

The Lord knew that these Exercises, tho' *Sharp to Nature*, would not only redound to his Glory, but turn to the great Advantage of Job : And therefore resolving to bear him up thro' them, that Satan should not prevail over him, (and to Recompence all his Sufferings with an *abundant Reward* in the End) he let out Satan's Chain a Link further, saying, *Behold, he is in thy Hand ; but spare his Life*, Satan, glad of this *Enlargement* of Power, quickly fell upon poor Job, and smote him with sore and grievous Boils, from the Sole of his Foot to the Crown of his Head, v. 6, 7.

Now was Job, if ever any Man, in a *deplorable* Condition ; his Body, as it were studded and covered over, with Botches, Boils, Blanes, Carbuncles and filthy Ulcers : No part free, from Top to Toe. And these, not arising from some *peccant Humour* in his Natural Constitution ; which would soon be spent, or might by Medicine be *Corrected*, or *Purged* out : But inflicted by the Envious one, whose malicious Policy would doubtless raise them to the highest *Extremity* ; that he might thereby (if possible) drive Job to blaspheme God. Well therefore may we conclude, that Job underwent the most *exquisite* and *inexpressible* Pains ;
and

Job. and that not for a Fit, a Pang, a Spurt, a short time, but for a continued Series of time, as will further appear anon. And that which increased his Misery, was the *Foulness* of his Distemper, which rendred him not only *abhorrent* to himself, but *loathsome* to all that were about him. So that not only his Relations and Friends abandoned him: But his very *menial Servants* withdrew from him, leaving him *destitute* of all humane help.

Of this, in his mournings, he afterwards complained, saying, *Mine Acquaintance are verily estranged from me. My Kinsfolk have failed; and my familiar Friends have forgotten me. They that dwell in my House, and my Maids, count me for a Stranger: I am an Alien in their sight. I called my Servant, and he gave me no Answer: No, tho' I intreated him with my Mouth, Chap. 19. ver. 13, 14, 15, 16.*

Consider him there sitting. He, that but the other Day, was *the greatest of all the Men of the East*, (*Chap. 1. 3.*) *Before whom the young Men hid themselves, and the Aged arose and stood up* (*Chap. 29. 8.*) *The Princes refrained talking, and the Nobles held their peace* (*ver. 9, 10.*) See him now sitting in the *Ashes*, covered with *Ulcerous Sores* and Corruption, scraping himself with a *Potsherd*; the foulest of Objects, and (as one of the Antients said of him) a *Dunghil* upon a *Dunghil*.

His Wife, who with the rest had forsaken him, and kept at a distance from him (which made him say, *My Breath is strange to my Wife, Chap. 19. 17.*) now came; with what intention is somewhat uncertain, whether of *Pity*, or *Scorn*: But certain it is that what she said to him, was so far from *relieving* him, that it *added* to his *Sorrow*.

Her words to him are rendred thus, *Dost thou still retain thine Integrity? Curse God, and die.* (*Chap. 2. 9.*) But from the *Ambiguity* of the *Equivocal* Word in the *Hebrew*, which signifies alike to *Bless*, as to *Curse*, disagreement hath arisen amongst Interpreters; and the words have been read by divers diversly.

They that make *Job's* Wife to bid him *Curse God*, and die, suppose *Job* to have lived, and these Exercises to have befallen him, after the Law was given (*Levit. 24. 15, 16.*) which made it *Death to Curse God*: And that his Wife (*an Arabian*, and *Heathen*) *knew the Law*, and the *Punishment for Blasphemy*; and spake thus to him, not to *reproach* him, but in *pity* to him, that he might be delivered from his Pains. Whereas, not only *General Consent* places *Job* before *Moses*, and *God's* accepting, and commending his Sacrifices, *offered in the Land of Uz*, proves he lived before the Law; which made it penal for any to offer Sacrifice in any other Place, than before the Ark or Tabernacle: Inasmuch that *Devout Gentiles* came thither to *Worship*; of which an Instance is in the *Ethiopian Eunuch*, *Acts 8. 27.* But if *Job* had lived after this Law was given; yet unlikely it is, that his Wife should so soon have learnt it, at such a Distance: Nor was it *obliging to Gentiles*, unless living among and under the *Jews*; neither was there any in the Land of *Uz*, who had power to have *executed* such a Law on *Job*, had he cursed, as these suppose she bad him.

Others render her words, *Dost thou yet retain thine Integrity, Blessing God, and yet dying!* Making her to use a most *bitter Sarcasm* to her Husband. As if she had said, *Dost thou yet retain thy Integrity to such a God, as, tho' thou continually blessest him, yet holds thee in a lingering Death, under these insupportable Pains?* But since *Satan's* design was to make *Job* curse God, why may it not be supposed, that he *instigated* her to persuade her Husband to it; not with respect to any *penal Law*, that she knew, or thought could take hold of him: But with expectation, that so open and bold a *Blasphemy* would provoke the *Divine Justice* im-
medi-

mediately to strike him dead, and thereby deliver him from his intolerable Miseries?

Job.

However it was, Certain it is, from *Job's* Answer (tho' of the mildest for so sharp an *Irony*, as that above) that he understood her *not to mean well*. Thou speakest, said he to her, *as one of the foolish Women speaketh*. What? (added he) *Shall we receive Good at the Hand of God, and shall we not receive Evil? Shall we rejoyce in Prosperity, when he gives it us? And shall we not patiently bear Adversity, when he suffers it to come upon us?*

Thus was *Job* preserved hitherto, that neither the *Loss* of his *Estate*, the untimely *Death* of his *Children*, the *Extremity* of his *Pains*, the *Ingratitude* of his *Friends*, the *Undutifulness* of his *Servants*, nor the *Provocation* of his *Wife*, drew him to utter an *offending* word. *In all this, Job did not sin with his Lips, Chap. 2. ver. 10.*

But now *Job* had some *particular* Friends, that lived *at a distance*, as well from one another, as from him. These were, *Eliphaz the Temanite*, so called from *Teman*, Grandson to *Esau*, by his Son *Eliphaz* (*Gen. 36. 10, 11.*) *Bildad the Shuhite*, descended from *Shuah*, the youngest Son of *Abraham* by *Keturah* (*Gen. 25. 2.*) And *Zophar the Naamathite*, whose Descent is not easily traced, without straining; tho' some would derive him from *Esau*.

When these had heard of all the *Evil* (that is *Affliction*) that was come upon *Job*, they made an *Appointment* to go together to visit him, to mourn with him, and to comfort him, *ver. 11.* Now these being great Men (the *Septuagint* calls them *Kings*;) it must take up some considerable time for them, after they had heard of *Job's* *Affliction*, to appoint their Place and Time to meet at; and then to travel in Company to him. So that many a *tedious* Day, and many a *restless* Night, had poor *Job*, with *patience*, undergone his *dolorous* Pains, before these Friends of his came at him.

When they came within sight of him, it was some time before they could assure themselves that it was he, so greatly was he altered, and so *unlike* himself. But when, being come nearer, they saw the miserable Condition he was in, they jointly lifted up their Voice and wept; and rending every one his Mantle, they sprinkled Dust upon their Heads towards Heaven, to express their Sorrow for him, *ver. 12.* And seeing the extream Grief that was upon him, they sat down by him upon the Ground seven Days and seven Nights, and *none spake a word unto him, ver. 13.* Either their own Sorrow suppressing their Speech; or their sense of his Misery, making them think it unseasonable for them to speak to him, till he began.

At length, the seven Days and Nights being over, *Job* brake silence, and *cursing* (not God, but) *the Day of his Birth*, in mournful Rhetorick wisht he had never been born, or that he had then immediately died, *Chap. 3.*

This gave occasion to *Eliphaz* (who, with the other two, had already conceived an *ill Opinion* of him, from the unaccountable greatness of his *Affliction*, which they concluded must needs be a severe hand of God in Judgment upon him, for some either deep Hypocrisy, or secret heinous Sin) to fall sharply upon *Job*. And *Eliphaz*, in *three Orations* (contained in *Chap. 4.* and *5. 15.* and *22.*) *Bildad* in *as many* (in *Chap. 8. 18.* and *25.*) And *Zophar*, in *Two* (*Chap. 11.* and *20.*) from *common Topics*, That such *Affliction*, as his could not come from any but God's Hand; And that it is not agreeable to the Justice of God, to afflict without Cause, or punish without Guilt: They charged *Job* with being a

Job. grievous Sinner, and great Hypocrite, labouring hard to *extort* from him a Confession of his Guilt.

Job on the contrary, being immoveably assured of his *Innocency*; of the *Cleanness* of his Hands, and the *Uprightness* of his Heart to God, would never yield to their Charges, to *make himself Guilty*, by *acknowledging Guilt*, where none was. But in *Responsory* Orations, successive to every one of theirs, *defended himself*, *refuted* their Suggestions, *maintained* his own Innocency, and *reprehended* their both Injustice and want of Charity. And whereas they, in their several Speeches, had interspersed sharp *Reflections*, severe *Censures*, biting *Ironies*, and bitter *Taunts* upon him; he in his Answers used *Liberty of Speech* towards them, not sparing sometimes to give them sharp *Nips*, and pinching *Repartees*: Yet always observing a *submiss* and humble Stile, tempered with great *regard* and *reverence*, when he spake of or to God. But not seeing the secret End the Lord had, in suffering this Tryal to come upon him; he often, and with great Importunity begg'd a *Discharge*, and *Release* out of this Life: That (hopeless of Relief by any other way) he might thereby be freed from the Misery he was in; lest Extremity of continued Pains should drive him to Impatience.

Now when *Job* had silenced these three *troublesome* Friends of his, one that was present, and had heard their Discourses on both sides, being full of *warm zeal* against both *Job* and them; against *Job*, for that (as he apprehended) he had *justified* himself, rather than God: And against them, because they had *condemned Job*, and yet had not *convicted* him, but given him over, and let him go off with the *last word*; undertook the matter.

This was *Elihu*, a young Man, descended from *Buz*, the Son of *Nabor*, *Abraham's* Brother, *Gen. 22. 21.* And of the Kindred of *Ram* or *Aram*, *Nabor's* Grandson (*Ibid.*) from whom the *Aramites* or *Syrians* came.

He, having made a Prefatory Excuse (in *Ch. 32.*) for his Interposing, being so young a Man in comparison of them; and for the *Plainness of Speech* he intended to treat them in, (desiring they would not expect from him, that he should *accept any Man's Person*, or give *Flattering Titles unto Man*, for he durst not do that, lest, if he did, *his Maker should cut him suddenly off*) attack'd *Job* in a long Oration (continued through *Chap. 33, 34, 35, 36, and 37.* And reprehending him, for insisting so much in his own *Vindication*, endeavoured to *convince* him, by *Arguments* drawn from God's *unlimited Sovereignty*, and from his *unsearchable Wisdom*, which produces Ends and Purposes, which Man cannot find out nor understand, That it is not inconsistent with his Justice, for God to lay his afflicting Hand upon the Best, and most Righteous of Men. And that therefore it is the Duty of all Men to bear such Exercises, when they fall, without complaining or *murmuring*; and to acknowledge the Justice of God therein.

All this *Job* with *regardful Attention* heard, and made *no Reply*: As probably he had said *less* before, in Answer to his three Friends, and that *less liable* to Exception, had he not been so *teaz'd* by their unkind, uncharitable and unjust *Reflections*; whereby, instead of being his *Comforters*, they proved *his Tormentors*, and drew from him, those *unguarded Expressions*, which both they, and, after them, *Elihu* turned against him.

When *Elihu* had done speaking, and all were silent, the Lord himself took up the matter, and out of the *Whirlwind* directed his Speech unto *Job*. Wherein setting forth, with the highest Amplifications, his *Omni-potence*, in the *forming* and *disposing* the Works of the Creation, both
of

of the *Heavenly Bodies*, and of the *inferiour Creatures*, as well on the *Earth*, as in the *Sea* (through *Chap. 38, 39, 40, and 41.*) he so effectually convinced *Job* of his own *Weakness*, and *Inability* (of himself) to understand the ways and mind of God, that *Job*, in the *deepest Humility* breaking forth, said, *Ebhold, I am vile, (that is mean, low, and contemptible, in comparifon of thee :) What fhall I Answer thee ? I will lay my Hands upon my Mouth. Once have I fpoken ; but I will not Answer : Yea, twice, but I will proceed no further, Chap. 42.* Job.

And afterwards, when the Lord had donẽ speaking to him, he more fully confest to the *Supremacy, Power and Wisdom* of God, faying to this effect, *I know that thou canst do every thing ; and that no Thought can be bidden from thee.* Well indeed mightest thou ask (*Chap. 38. 2.*) who he was, that darkned Counsel, by words without Knowledge : For I am sensible *I have uttered that I understood not, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.* But hence forward I desire to learn of thee : Therefore hear, I beseech thee, when I speak : And declare unto me what I ask thee. *I have heard of thee before by the hearing of the Ear ; (which gave me but a remote Knowledge of thee) but now I have obtained a more clear and certain Knowledge of thee ; for now mine Eye fees thee.* Wherefore I reprove my self for what I have said amifs, and Repent therefore in Dust and Ashes ; that is, sincerely and heartily, *Chap. 42. 1. to 7.*

With this *so free and humble Acknowledgment*, the Lord was so well pleased, that he thereupon took part with *Job* against his *injurious Friends*. Wherefore he said to *Eliphaz the Temanite*, *My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two Friends : For ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my Servant Job hath.* Therefore take unto you now seven *Bullocks*, and seven *Rams*, and go to my Servant *Job*, and offer up for your selves a *Burnt-Offering* ; and my Servant *Job* shall pray for you : For him (that is, his Prayers) will I accept ; lest I deal with you after your Folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, like my Servant *Job*, *ver. 7, 8.*

Accordingly *Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar* did as the Lord commanded them : And the Lord accepted *Job's Intercession* for them. And when *Job* prayed for his Friends, the Lord turned his Captivity, and gave him twice as much as he had before : So that he had *Fourteen Thousand Sheep*, and *Six Thousand Camels*, and *One Thousand Yoke of Oxen*, and *One Thousand She-Ases*. He had also *Seven Sons*, and *Three Daughters*, the fairest of all the Women in the Land : And their Father gave them *Inheritance* among their Brethren. *Job's Brethren* also and his Sisters (which may be understood to comprehend all his Kindred) together with others of his former Acquaintance, made *Visits of Condolence* to him, and brought him *Presents* ; whereby he was very much enriched. And after this, *Job* lived an Hundred and Forty Years, till he had seen his Sons, and his Son's Sons, even *Four Generations* ; and then died, an old Man, and full of Days, from *ver. 9. to the End.*

The End of the Book of JOB.

T H E

T H E
B O O K
O F
EXODUS.

Which signifies Going forth : So called, because it treats of the Going forth, or Departure of the Israelites out of Egypt. And contains an History of about 144 Years.

THE Story of *Job* thus brought, as near as well I could, to it's proper Time and Place : who descending from *Abraham*, by a second *Venter*, and in another *Line*, is a great Instance of that great *Father's* pious Care, in Instructing his Household in the Knowledge, and Fear of the true God. Let us now return to *Jacob's* Family, which we left in *Egypt*, Embalming *Joseph* ; and see how it has fared all this while with the Children of *Israel* there.

After the Death of *Joseph*, there arose up a New King over *Egypt*, another *Pharaoh* ; who had not had a Personal Knowledge of *Joseph*. And an Age being now past, since the great *Egyptian* Famine, and the whole Generation of Men that lived in that time, who had tasted of *Joseph's* Provident Kindness, worn out and gone, the Memory of *Joseph's* Benefits to that Crown and Kingdom, which ought to have been engraven on Pillars of Marble, to have lasted to the utmost date of Time, was (to the lasting Infamy of that Nation) already forgotten and lost : Tho' it might have been easily found (if no where else) in the Court of Augmentations of the Revenues of that Crown ; had but common Gratitude sought for it there.

This New King, observing that the Children of *Israel* were Fruitful, and encreased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceedingly mighty ; So that the Land (of *Goshen*, wherein they lived) was filled with them, held it expedient to contrive some way, to secure them to himself,

and himself from Danger by them. Convening therefore the Chief of
Exod. 1. his own People, he thus spake unto them.

‘Behold, the People of the Children of *Israel* are more, and more
 ‘mighty than we. Come on therefore, said he, Let us deal wisely with
 ‘them; lest they yet multiply: And it come to pass, That if there
 ‘should fall out any War, they either join themselves unto our Enemies
 ‘(and so put us to the worst;) or get them up out of the Land (and
 ‘so we lose the Advantage we may make by them.)

The *Egyptians*, approving the *Politick* Fears of their *Cautious* King,
 they jointly agreed to imploy the Children of *Israel* in *making Brick*,
 and building *Store-Cities* for *Pharaoh*. And because the Design of this
 Undertaking was not only to reap the Profits of their Service: But
 by continual hard Labour to *impoverish* them, *enfeeble* their Bodies,
 and *imbase* their Spirits, they set *Task-Masters* over them, to *afflict* them
 with Burdens, and made them *serve with Rigour*, so that they made
 their Lives *bitter* with hard Bondage, in Mortar, and in Brick, and in all
 manner of Service in the Field: All their Service, wherewith they made
 them serve, was *with Rigour*. Yet, as *Camomil* grows the faster for
 being *trod* upon; and the *Palm-Tree*, loaded with *Weights*, shoots up
 the higher: So the more the *Israelites* were oppressed, the more they
 multiplied and grew. This vext the *Egyptians*: For (as the Poet
 hath it.)

Invidus alterius rebus macrescit opimis.

The Envious Man frets, till himself grows lean.
 Because his Neighbour's Fortune is serene.

And the *Egyptians* (it is said) *were grieved* because of the Children of
Israel, ver. 12. that is, it troubled them to see the *Israelites* encrease
 and grow strong, notwithstanding the heavy Burdens they laid on
 them.

To suppress their Growth therefore, the King spake to two of the
Hebrew Midwives (who probably were the chief amongst them in that
 Profession) and gave them a strict Charge, that when they should do
 the Office of a Midwife to the *Hebrew* Women, if the Child were a
 Son, they should *kill* him: But if a Daughter, then she should live, v. 15,
 16. But those good Midwives (of which the one was named *Shiprah*,
 and the other *Puah*) fearing God, did not as the King had commanded
 them; but saved the Men Children alive also. This *Pious* Mind in
 the Midwives, in preferring the *just* Law of God, to the *unjust* Law of
 the King, was so acceptable to God, that he is said thereupon to have
dealt well with them: Because they feared God, he *made them Houses*;
 that is, he made them prosper, gave them Children, and blessed their
 Families. And by this means the People still multiplied, and waxed
 very mighty.

But when the King understood how the Midwives had dealt with
 him, he called them to account for it, demanding of them, in great Dis-
 pleasure, *Why they had done this thing, and had saved the Men Children*
alive? They, to excuse themselves, and pacify him, told him, *The*
Hebrew Women were not as the Egyptian Women: But being lively and
strong, they were delivered before the Midwives could come to them.
 The King, whether satisfied, or not, with this Answer; not finding
 it safe to trust to the Midwives any longer, resolved to take a more
Exod. 2. effectual Course: And therefore gave Charge to all his People, That
 every Son, which should be born to the *Hebrews*, they should *cast into*
the River; but should save every Daughter alive.

Here

Here it may be worth while to observe, that *Persecution*, as it *hardens* the Heart, so also it *blinds* the Judgment of the *Persecutors*; making them act even against their own *Interests*. Pharaoh's *Persecuting* the Israelites, in *forcing* them by *rigorous* ways, to labour for him in *Servile Drudgery*, on purpose to *oppress* and *suppress* them, *hardened* his Heart to advance to an higher Degree of Cruelty, in commanding all the Male-Children to be *Murdered*. And had he not been absolutely *blinded*, he must have seen, that the *Means* he used destroyed the *End* he aimed at. For the chief Reason why he would keep the *Israelites* under, was, lest they should grow strong enough to deliver themselves out of *Egypt*, and so he should *lose the Profit* he would make of them. But if he had destroyed all the Male-Children, as fast as they were born, there could have been *no Succession* of Men of that Race: So that when the present Generation had been worn out, all the *Girls* being saved alive, he might have been troubled with a *numerous* Company of *burdensom* Women, without ever a Man to *maintain* them, or *work* for him. And thereby he would have brought upon himself a great Charge, without Profit. But to return to the Story.

This *cruel Edict*, for drowning all the Male-Children, must needs cause *great Sorrow* to the *Hebrew-Parents*; and put them (no doubt) upon many a thoughtful *Contrivance*, for the Safety of their poor Babes. Of which an Instance quickly follows.

Some time before this Law came forth, one of the *Israelites*, of the House of *Levi*, whose Name was *Amram*, (*Chap. 6. 20.*) took to Wife a Daughter of *Levi*, named *Jochebed*, by whom he had a Daughter named *Miriam*; and about Four years after, a Son named *Aaron*: Whose Life it is probable the Godly *Midwives* had spared. About Three years after *Aaron's* Birth, *Jochebed* bare another Son; who was not only a *fair* and *goodly* Child, but had something Extraordinary and Supernatural, of a *Divine Beauty* upon him: Which made his Mother the more *regardful* of him, and more *Solicitous* for his Preservation. Wherefore she kept him hid *Three Months*, that none of her *Egyptian* Neighbours might know of him. But finding she could no longer hide him; and fearing lest he should fall into the Hands of those, that were appointed to drown the Male-Children, she (no doubt, by a Divine *Instinct*) contrived this way for his Preservation. She made a little *Ark*, or Boat, of *Bulrushes*; which she daubed with *Slime* and *Pitch*, that it might keep the Water out, and having put the Child therein, she laid it in the *Flags* by the River's Brink: And set his Sister *Miriam* (who was then about *Seven* years old) aloof off, to observe what became of him.

A. M.
2433.

Propitious Providence so ordered, that presently after, *Pharaoh's* Daughter (whom the *Jewish* Antiquary calls *Thermuthis*) came down with her Maidens, to wash her self at the River. And while she walked along by the River's side, perceiving the little *floating Ark*, she sent one of her Maids to fetch it: Who having brought it to her, when she had opened it she saw the Child; and behold, *the Babe wept*. This drew from her *Compassion* to the Infant, and made her, with an Accent of Pity, say, *This is one of the Hebrews Children!*

Little *Miriam*, well instructed by her Mother, found means to cast her self among them; and observing that *Pharaoh's* Daughter took it for one of the *Hebrews* Children, *Shall I go* (said she to her) *and call to thee a Nurse of the Hebrew Women, that she may Nurse the Child for thee?* Ay, go, said *Pharaoh's* Daughter: Whereupon away went the Girl, and quickly brought (her own, and) the Child's Mother. To whom *Pharaoh's* Daughter said, *Take this Child and Nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy Wages.*

This

This was a *welcome Bargain* to the Mother : who taking the Child *Exod. 2.* home with her, durst now nurse it openly. And when the Child was grown big enough, she brought him unto *Pharaoh's* Daughter ; who *adopted* him for her Son. And in remembrance that she drew him out of the Water, she called his Name *Moses*. Which signifies (says Dr. Gell, in his Essay, p. 185. not *Drawn out*, as the Margin gives, but) *I drew him out*. Prophetically shewing, tho' at unawares, by his Name, that he should *draw Israel out of Egypt*. Whereas his Parents, at his Circumcision (as the same Dr. Gell there, from *Clem. Alex. l. 1. Strom.* delivers) had called him *Joachim* (The Resurrection of the Lord) from a *presaging* Hope, that the Lord, thro' him, would *raise up* his People *Israel*, deliver them from the *Egyptian* Bondage they were then in, and bring them again into the promised Land.

Moses being brought up in *Pharaoh's* Court, was instructed in the *Sciences* and *Discipline* then used among the *Egyptians*, both *Civil* and *Military*, Which might make *Stephen* say of him, that he was *learned in all the Wisdom of the Egyptians*, and *was mighty in Words and in Deeds*, (*Acts 7. 22.*) Which, as divers other things, not being read in the old Testament, Dr. *Hammond* (on *2 Tim. 3. 8.*) says, are taken out of other Records of the *Jews*. And both *Josephus*, lib. 2. *Antiq.* and *Clem. Alexan. lib. 1. Strom.* (as Dr. Gell in his Essay p. 187. delivers) report of *Moses*, That he was General of the *Egyptian* Forces, obtained a great Victory over the *Ethiopians*, and did many other great things, before he visited his Brethren.

But when he was grown strong, and (as *Stephen* has it, *Acts 7. 23.*) was full *Forty years old*, it came into his Heart to visit his Brethren, the *Children of Israel* ; Wherefore he went out unto them, and looked on their Burdens : The sight of which must needs raise in him *Compassion* towards them, as well as *Indignation* towards their Oppressors, which too was heightened by his espying an *Egyptian* smiting one of his Brethren, an *Hebrew*. Wherefore looking about, to see that the Coast was clear, and not perceiving any Man in Sight, he without more to do, *slew the Egyptian*, and hid him in the Sand : Supposing his Brethren would have understood, that God by his hand would deliver them (from whence may well be inferred, that he had in himself such a Persuasion, and a stirring of Spirit thereunto, which drew him to go among them ;) but they understood not.

However, the next day he went out, and shewed himself among them again. And finding two Men of the *Hebrews* striving one with the other, he put them in mind that they were Brethren, and would have made them Friends ; asking him that did the wrong, *Why smitest thou thy Fellow ?* But he that did the wrong, thrust him away, saying, *Who made thee a Prince and a Judge over us ? Dost thou intend to kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday ?*

That word startled *Moses* : For by that he saw, that his killing the *Egyptian*, which he thought to have kept *secret*, was known further than he was aware of : And he might well conclude, if that should once come to *Pharaoh's* Ear, it could not be safe for him to abide in *Egypt*. Nor were his Fears vain ; for *Pharaoh* soon got the knowledge of it, and sought to *slay* him : Whereupon *Moses* fled, and went to seek his Fortunes in *Midian*.

A. M. 2473. In his Travel he sat down by a Well ; where, while he rested himself, the Daughters of the Prince of *Midian*, seven in Number, came to draw water, to fill the Troughs, that they might water their Father's Sheep. But the *rustick* Shepherds, willing to serve their own turns first, rudely came and drove them away. Which *Moses* seeing, and holding it his

his duty to *relieve the Oppressed*, he bravely stood up in defence of the Shepherdesses, and helped them to water their Flock. By this *Exod. 2.* Means they went home earlier that day, than ordinarily they were wont to do. Which being observed by *Reuel*, their Grandfather (so he was, tho' here he be called their Father :) For this *Reuel*, (who is also called *Raguel*, *Numb. 10. 29.* was Father to *Hobab*, called also, and more commonly, *Jethro*, *Exod. 3. 1.*) he asked them how it came to pass that they were come so soon? And when they told him, An *Egyptian* had delivered them out of the hand of the Shepherds, and had also drawn water enough for them, and watered their Flock, he, reprehending their *ingratitude*, asked, *Where is he? Why have ye left the Man abroad?* said he to them: Invite him in, that he may refresh himself.

This courteous Entertainment, drew *Moses* to express a willingness to abide with them, and take upon him the charge of *Jethro's* Sheep; which he did. And in process of time, *Jethro* bestowing his Daughter *Zipporah*, one of those seven Shepherdesses upon him, he had by her two Sons, the Eldest of which he named *Gershom*, which signifies *A stranger there*: For he said, *I have been a Stranger in a strange Land.* And the Younger he called *Eliezer*; importing, *God my Help*: For the *God of my Father*, said he, *was my Help, and delivered me from the Sword of Pharaoh*, *Exod. 18. 4.*

Now during the time that *Moses* thus sojourned with *Jethro* in *Midian*, the King of *Egypt* died: But the next Successor proved no better. The oppressed *Hebrews* changed their Oppressor, but not their Condition; their Oppressions were continued upon them, and rather increased, than any whit abated. So that the Children of *Israel* under the weight of their Burden, *sighed*; and from *Sighing*, proceeded to *Crying*; and from *Crying*, to *Groaning*. They *sighed by reason of the Bondage, and they cried; and their Cry came up unto God, by reason of the Bondage*: And God heard the *Groaning*; and remembered his Covenant with *Abraham*, with *Isaac* and with *Jacob*. And God looked upon the Children of *Israel* (with Compassion) and had respect unto them. And the appointed time of their deliverance drawing nigh, he now began to prepare *Moses*, whom he intended to make use of as an Instrument therein.

Moses therefore keeping his Father-in-law *Jethro's* Sheep, led the Flock to the backside of the Desert: Where note the manner of those *Exod. 3.* Times and Countries, that whereas the Shepherds here drive their Flocks before them, the Shepherds there went before their Flocks, and the Flocks followed them: which Custom is alluded to in *Psal. 80. 1.* and *Joh. 10. 4.*

When he was come to *Horeb* (which signifies *Forfaken*, and is called here the Mountain of God by Anticipation, both from the following Appearance of God upon it, at this time, and his descending upon it afterwards, to give the Law to his People, *Chap. 19. 20.* where tho' it is called *Sinai*, it is the same place with this; for *Stephen*, reciting this present Passage, *Acts 7. 30.* calls it *Sinai* :) The Angel of the Lord appeared there unto him in a *Flame of Fire* out of the midst of a *Bush*. And he looking, saw that the bush burned with Fire, and yet it was not consumed.

This was a lively Emblem of the then State of God's People in *Egypt*, who, tho' the *Fire of Affliction* did burn vehemently among them, and upon them, in the grievous Oppressions they lay under, yet they were not consumed by it; but did rather thrive and increase.

This so rare and extraordinary Sight drew *Moses* to observe and consider it more attentively: And made him say (within himself,) I

will now turn aside, and see this great Sight, Why the Bush is not burnt up.
 Exod. 3. This great Sight, begetting in Moses a great Curiosity, drew him into a great Service. For when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the Bush, and said, *Moses, Moses*; And Moses Answering, *Here am I*: God (to strike the greater Sense into him of the presence of the Divine Majesty, and to raise in him a suitable Reverence, that he might be in the fitter frame to receive what he intended to speak to him) stopt him from coming on any nearer, by saying, *Darw not nigh hither; Put off thy Shoes from off thy Feet: For the Place, whereon thou standest, is Holy Ground.* The like Speech we read in Josh. 5. 15. when Christ appeared to Joshua, in the Form of an armed Man, declaring himself Captain of the Host of the Lord. Which shews, that wheresoever God, who is Holiness, appears, the Place is Holy, while he is there. Therefore Tremellius and Junius, in their Note on those Words [*Holy Ground*] Exod. 3. 5. say, *Ob presentiam Dei sanctificantem; qua abeunte, loco sanctitas tollatur.* i. e. By reason of God's presence Sanctifying it; which departing, the Holiness of the Place was taken away.

To Moses, thus prepared for an awful attention, God said moreover, *I am the God of thy Father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.* Whereupon Moses, from a Profound Reverence of the Divine Majesty, covered his Face: For he was afraid to look upon God. Then the Lord proceeding said, *I have surely seen the Affliction of my People, which are in Egypt, and have heard their Cry, by reason of their Task-Masters; for I know their Sorrows: And I am come down* (so by a Figure called *Anthropopathy*, which is a speaking according to human Passion, or after the manner of Men, God vouchsafes to stoop to Man's Capacity, that Man may understand him :) *I am come down, (said he,) to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that Land, unto a good Land, and a large, a Land flowing with Milk and Honey* (an Hyperbolical Expression of Fruitfulness, and plenty of good things;) *unto the Place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.* Now therefore, *seeing the Cry of the Children of Israel is come unto me; and I have not only heard it, but have also seen the Oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them: Come now, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my People, the Children of Israel out of Egypt.*

At this unexpected Word Moses was much startled; he knew how things stood with him in Egypt, and upon what occasion he had left the Egyptian Court: And (probably, not having heard that the old King of Egypt, who had fought his Life, was dead) he began to make Excuses. First, from his own meanness and insufficiency. *Who am I, said he, that I should go unto Pharaoh; and that I should bring forth the Children of Israel out of Egypt?*

This Excuse God removed, by saying, *I will certainly be with thee* (I, in whom all Ability, all Sufficiency is;) And let this extraordinary Sight, which thou hast now seen, be a token to thee that I have sent thee: And when thou hast brought forth the People out of Egypt, ye shall serve God on this Mountain.

But said Moses, Behold, when I come unto the Children of Israel, and shall say unto them, *The God of your Fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say unto me, What is his Name? What shall I say unto them?* I A M T H A T I A M, replied God: And thus (said he,) shalt thou say unto the Children of Israel, *I A M hath sent me unto you.* So the English Translation hath it. But both Pagnine and Arias Mon-

tanus turn it, *I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE*. And Dr. Gell (Essay, p. 188.) contends that it ought to be so rendred, not only *Exod. 3.* from the Letter of the Hebrew Text, but from the *genuine Sense* of the Words. I only touch it, for the Reader's Information, and leave it.

Moreover, God said unto Moses, *Thus shalt thou say unto the Children of Israel* (by the Elders of Israel whom thou shalt gather together) *The Lord God of your Fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto me, and hath sent me unto you, to say unto you, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt; And I have said, I will bring you up out of the Affliction of Egypt, unto the Land of the Canaanites, &c.* And they shall hearken unto thy Voice; and thou shalt come, thou and the Elders of Israel unto the King of Egypt, and shalt say unto him, *The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us: (under which Words [hath met with us,] is implied, hath commanded us to go and worship him in such a Place;) and now let us go, we beseech thee, three Days Journey into the Wilderness, that we may Sacrifice to the Lord our God.*

This Request of Leave to go three Days Journey, was a *Politick Contrivance*; whereby, if it were granted, they might easily have freed themselves from Pharaoh's Yoke: And if denied, he would be left the more *inexcusable*, since the thing requested appeared so reasonable.

And I am sure, added God, *That the King of Egypt will not let you go: No, not by a mighty Hand (or rather, as in the Margin, but by a mighty Hand.) But, I (said the Lord) will stretch out my Hand, and smite Egypt with all my Wonders: And after that he shall let you go. And I will give this People Favour in the sight of the Egyptians: so that, when ye do go, ye shall not go empty: But every Woman shall borrow of her Neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her House (or in whose House she sojourneth) Jewels of Silver, and of Gold, and Raiment; which ye shall put upon your Children, and so spoil the Egyptians.*

Tho' here was enough said, one would think (especially considering by whom it was said) to have removed all Moses's Scruples; yet *backward Moses* still objects. Behold, said he, *They will not believe me, nor hearken unto my Voice; for they will say, the Lord hath not appeared unto thee: And then how shall I convince them that he hath?* *Exod. 4.*

The Lord hereupon *condescending* to Moses's Weakness, gave him several Signs; both to beget a firm belief in him, and to convince the Israelites. First therefore, being asked what he had in his Hand? and he replying, *A Rod (or Staff, which probably was a Sheep-hook) Cast it on the Ground*, said the Lord; and when he had cast it on the Ground, *it became a Serpent: So that Moses, scared with his own Rod, fled from before it. But when the Lord bid him, Put forth his hand, and take it by the Tail, he thereby encouraged, caught hold of it, and it resuming its former Shape, became a Rod again in his Hand.* This the Lord did to confirm Moses, and that when he should do the same in the Sight of the Children of Israel, they might believe that the Lord God of their Fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, had indeed appeared unto him, and sent him.

And because he would leave no Room for doubting, he vouchsafed to give him another Sign. Put now, (said he) *thine Hand into thy Bosom.* Moses did so: And when he took it out again, *his Hand was Leprous, White as Snow.* And when, by God's Command, he had put his Hand into his Bosom again, and pluck'd it out, behold, his Hand was *turned again*, as his other *Flesh*. The Evidence of this Miracle was so great (in

Exod. 4. (in that the *White Leprosie*, which was held *incurable*, was both inflicted and healed in an *Instant*, and without any outward Means, or Physical Application) that God from thence inferred to *Moses*, that if the *Israelites* should not believe him upon the *first* Sign, yet they would believe him upon this latter. Yet to arm him sufficiently, and beyond all question, he was pleased to add a *Third*. If (said he) they will not believe these two Signs, *Thou shalt take of the Water of the River, and pour it upon the dry Land, and that Water shall become Blood.*

Moses notwithstanding all this, had yet another Excuse; want of good utterance. O my Lord, said he, *I am not Eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken to thy Servant: But I am slow of Speech, and of a slow Tongue.*

This Objection God easily removed, by putting *Moses* to consider, who it was that made Man's Mouth. Or who (said he) *maketh the Dumb, or the Deaf, or the Seeing, or the Blind?* Have not I the Lord? Now therefore Go, (said God again to him) *and I will be with thy Mouth, and teach thee what thou shouldst say.*

Hitherto *Moses* had some Pretence, some shew of Reason for his unwillingness; something to Alledge, some Excuse to make. But now all his Objections are answered, all his Doubts and Scruples removed; He is now left wholly without Excuse, has nothing to say why he should not go on God's Message: And yet he is as backward, as unwilling to go, as ever. Having therefore no further Pretext to make, he now bluntly says, *O my Lord, send I pray thee (instead of me) BY HIM WHOM THOU WILT SEND.*

While *Moses* had any thing, how little so ever, to alledge in Excuse for his not going, we do not read the Lord was angry with him; but graciously condescended to answer his Objections, and remove his Doubts. But now that he shewed his unwillingness, when all his Objections were answered, and he had nothing left to say for himself, It is said, *The Anger of the Lord was kindled against him.* Which shews, that tho' the Lord will bear long with Man's Weakness, yet he will not be dallied with.

It is the Opinion of divers Commentators on this Place, and it is very probable, that *Moses* had another Reason, which made him unwilling to go on this Errand into *Egypt*, and which he was not willing to discover. Just before God appeared to *Moses* in the Bush, and entertained this Discourse with him, we read (*Exod. 2. 23.*) that the King of *Egypt* died; that King, in whose Reign *Moses* had slain the *Egyptian*, and who had sought to apprehend *Moses*, and put him to Death for it. The Report of that King's Death might probably not yet have reached *Moses* his Ear. However, he might reasonably think, that some of the Kindred of the slain Man were yet living, who might prosecute him for the Murther: And for that Reason he might be loth to return to *Egypt* (from whence on that occasion he fled for his Life) lest he should be taken and executed for that Fact. However, it is observable, that God would not free him from this Fear, till he had absolutely resigned, and wholly submitted to his Will in going.

God therefore resuming *Moses* his last Objection, want of Eloquence (which he had answered before in General, by saying, *I will be with thy Mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say*) now shews him more particularly how he would supply that Defect. Is not Aaron the Levite thy Brother, said he? *I know that he can speak well.* And also behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: And when he shall see thee, he will be glad in his Heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his Mouth; and I will be with thy Mouth, and with his Mouth, and will teach

teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be to thee *instead of a Mouth* (that is, he shall be thy *Spokesman*;) and thou shalt be to him *instead* *Exod. 4.* of God, (that is, thou shalt impart to him, what thou receivest from me.) And thou shalt take this Rod in thy Hand, wherewith thou shalt do Signs.

Now *Moses*, having stood out as long as he could, at length yields; and taking the Rod of God in his Hand (for so it is now called, since God had so signally honoured it, and as it were *Consecrated* it to an Holy use) he set his Wife and Sons upon an Ass, that he might bring them from *Mount-Horeb* to the House of *Jethro* his Father-in-law; where it seems he left them, until he brought up the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, when *Jethro* brought them to him again in the Wilderness, *Exod. 18. 2, &c.*

Now that *Moses* had fully given up to obey God, and was fitting himself for his Journey, God, to ease his Mind of his Fears, and make him go on more cheerfully, said to him, Go, return into *Egypt*, (which thou mayst now do without Danger:) For all the Men are Dead which sought thy Life. And when thou goest to return into *Egypt*, see that thou do all those Wonders before *Pharaoh*, which I have put in thy Hand: But I will harden his Heart, that he shall not let the People go. And thou shalt say unto *Pharaoh*, thus saith the Lord, *Israel is my Son, even my First-born*; and I say unto thee, Let my Son go, that he may serve me: And if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy Son, even thy First-born.

Moses, it seems, either thro' Negligence, or too much Indulgence to his Wife (who was not an *Israelite*) had forborn to Circumcise one of his Sons; by which he had provoked the Lord to Displeasure, which in the way brake out upon him, so that it is said, The Lord met him, and sought to kill him. His Wife *Zipporah*, understanding the ground of this Divine Displeasure to be the Omission of Circumcision, presently taking up a sharp Stone, cut off the Foreskin of her Son, and casting it at her Husbands Feet, cried out, A Bloody Husband thou art to me. However, tho' she, who her self understood not so well the Covenant of Circumcision, spake this in Displeasure: Yet the thing being done, the Lord pardoned *Moses*, and dismissed him to pursue his Journey.

Being come to his Father-in-Law *Jethro*, as it is probable he had not before acquainted him with the particular Reason of his leaving *Egypt*; so now he said nothing to him (that appears) of the Vision he had seen, nor of the Message he had received from God to deliver to the King of *Egypt*: But only asked *Jethro's* Consent, (into whose Service he had entred himself, and unto whom he now stood related as a Son-in-law) that he might return unto his Brethren, that were in *Egypt*, and see whether they were yet alive. *Jethro* readily expressed his Consent, by that then usual Form of Speech, Go in Peace; importing an Allowance and Approbation, as well as Appreciation of good Success.

Moses, being now on his way towards *Egypt*, the Lord said unto *Aaron*, his Brother, Go into the Wilderness to meet *Moses*. *Aaron* forthwith went, and meeting him in the Mount of God, saluted him; and *Moses* told him how the Lord had sent him, what the Lord had said unto him, and all the Signs which he had commanded him. Wherefore being come into *Egypt*, and having gathered all the Elders of the Children of *Israel* together; *Aaron* delivered unto them the Message which the Lord had sent by *Moses*; and *Moses* confirmed it to them, by doing the Signs, which God had commanded, in the sight of the People, who thereupon believed. And when they found that the Lord had visited the Chil-

dren of *Israel*, and that he had looked upon their Affliction (and had taken Course for their Deliverance) they bowed their Heads, and *Worshipped*.

Exod. 5.
A. M.
2513.

But when *Moses* and *Aaron* went to *Pharaoh*, and told him, Thus saith the Lord God of *Israel*; *Let my People go, that they may hold a Feast to me in the Wilderness*; *Pharaoh* answered, *Who is the Lord*, (whom ye call the God of *Israel*) *that I should obey his Voice? I know not the Lord*, (I don't own *Israel's* God) *neither will I let Israel go*.

They, to inform him better whom they meant by the Lord, replied, *The God of the Hebrews*, (whose Name is called upon us, or whose Name we call upon) *hath met us* (and hath commanded us to offer Sacrifice unto him:) *Let us go*, we pray thee, *three Days Journey into the Desert, and Sacrifice unto the Lord our God*; *lest he fall upon us with Pestilence, or with the Sword*.

But the King of *Egypt*, not regarding what they said, took them up short, saying, *Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, hinder the People from their Works? Behold, the People are now grown many in the Land, and ye make them leave their Burdens: Get you your selves to your Burdens*. By which it appears, that this new King understood not the Circumstances *Moses* was under.

Having thus turned off *Moses* and *Aaron*, he gave charge the same Day to his *Task-masters*, that they should no more give the People *Straw* to make *Brick*, as they had done before; but let them go and gather *Straw* for themselves where they could find it: And yet that they should lay upon them the full *Tale* of *Bricks*, which they had made formerly, without any Abatement. For, said he, *They are idle; therefore they cry, Let us go Sacrifice to our God*. Wherefore, added he, *let the Work be heavy upon them, that they may labour therein; and let them not regard vain Words*.

Now when the *Task-masters*, and their under Officers, had acquainted the *Israelites* with This Command of *Pharaoh*, (that they should have no more *Straw* allowed them, and yet have no part of their Work abated) they were fain to straggle about, thro' the Land of *Egypt*, to gather *Stubble* instead of *Straw*: And the *Task-masters* hurried them on, to fulfil their Works, their daily Tasks, as they did when they had *Straw*. Which when they could not do, those of the Children of *Israel*, whom the *Task-masters* had set over the rest, to see that they performed their Tasks, were called to account, and beaten.

These under-Officers, who were *Israelites*, that they might know the Truth of the Matter, whether this new hardship proceeded from the King, or from the rigorous *Task-masters*, went and made their Complaint to the King, and laying their Grievance before him, in an humble manner expostulated the matter with him thus. *Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy Servants? There is no Straw given unto thy Servants, and yet the Task-masters say to us, Make Brick*. And behold, *Thy Servants are beaten*; but *the Fault is in thy own People*.

Instead of *Redress*, they received from the King this rough Answer, *Ye are idle, idle: Therefore ye say, Let us go and do Sacrifice to the Lord, Go, therefore now, and Work: For there shall no Straw be given you; and yet ye shall deliver the full Tale of Bricks*.

By this the *Israelitish Officers* plainly saw, that they were in an ill Condition. Wherefore meeting with *Moses* and *Aaron* (who stood in the way, as they came forth from *Pharaoh*) and unadvisedly giving way to their present Passion, they discharged their Grief and Displeasure upon them, saying, *The Lord look upon you, and Judge: For ye have made us loathsome in the sight of Pharaoh, and of his Servants; and have put a Sword into their Hand to slay us*.

This

This was an hard Return to poor *Moses* for his Love and Labour. Wherefore as soon as he could find a Place of Retirement, he address himself to the Lord in this humble Expostulation, *Wherefore, O Lord, hast thou evil intreated this People? Why is it that thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh, to speak in thy Name, he hath done Evil to this People; and thou hast not delivered thy People at all.* Exod. 6.

Well but (said the Lord) Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: For (before I have done with him) he shall be glad to let them go; and when he has thoroughly felt the weight of my Hand upon him, he shall, with a strong Hand, drive them out of his Land. For I am *JEHOVAH*; and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the Name of God Almighty: But by my Name *JEHOVAH* was I not known to them.

Not that they had not heard the word *JEHOVAH*: For that was used to them, *Gen.* 15. 7. and 26. 25. and 28. 13. And doubtless they knew him by his Name *JEHOVAH*, in part, and as it respected those two parts of Time, Past and Present; in the many Deliverances he had wrought for them, and in the Promise he made them of the Land of Canaan. Thus they knew what he had been, and what he was to them. But with respect to the Third Part of Time, expressed in the Name *JEHOVAH*, what he would be, in the Performance of that Promise, they rather believed, than knew; or knew no otherwise than by Faith. But now, their Children should know him by his Name *JEHOVAH* throughout, in all its Parts; not only what he had been, and was, but what he will be. They shall know that he is and will be in Performing, the same that he was in Promising: For they shall experience the fulfilling of that Promise, which he made to their Fathers in their own Personal and actual Deliverance out of Egypt.

For I have not only (said God to Moses) established my Covenant with them, (the Fathers) to give them (in their Posterity) the Land of Canaan, the Land of their Pilgrimage, wherein they were Strangers: But I have also heard the Groanings of the Children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in Bondage; and I have remembered my Covenant, (which I made with their Fathers for their Deliverance.) Wherefore say unto the Children of Israel, I am Jehovah, (Existing only of my self, and giving Existence unto all Beings.) And I will bring you out from under the Burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their Bondage, and I will Redeem you with a stretched-out Arm, and with great Judgments (upon them that Oppress you.) Nor will I only deliver you from your Bondage; but I will take you to me for a People, and I will be to you a God: And ye shall know that I am *JEHOVAH* your God, which bringeth you out from under the Burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you into the Land, concerning which I did lift up my Hand, in confirmation that I would give it to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and I will give it to you for an Heritage: I am *JEHOVAH*; that is, I am he, who both can and will do this.

Moses thus sent, goes again to the Children of Israel, and spake to them as the Lord had directed him. But they, guided more by Sense than Faith, and finding their Burdens increased upon them, since he undertook to plead their Cause with Pharaoh, were so possessed with Prejudice towards him, that they would not so much as hearken unto him.

Wherefore leaving them, till either the Extremity of their Sufferings, or God's Eminent Hand in plaguing their Oppressors, should awaken them to a greater desire of Deliverance, God sent Moses to Pharaoh again. Go in (said he,) and speak unto Pharaoh King of Egypt, that he let the Children of Israel go out of his Land.

Moses

Moses wondred at this: And drawing an Argument à *Minori*, Alas, *Exod. 6.* said he, Since the Children of *Israel*, thine own People, would not hear me, tho' to their own so great Advantage: How is it likely that so wicked a Prince as *Pharaoh* is, should lend an Ear to such a Stammerer as I am, in a matter so much to his own Loss.

But the Lord, to remove *Moses* his Wonder, and take away also his Excuse, said to him: See, I have made thee a God to *Pharaoh*, and *Aaron* thy Brother shall be thy Prophet, (Spokesman, or Interpreter.) Thou shalt speak to *Aaron* all that I command thee, and *Aaron* shall speak unto *Pharaoh*, that he send the Children of *Israel* out of his Land. Yet, that thou mayest not be discouraged by a Repulse, as before; take notice before hand, that *Pharaoh* shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my Hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine Armies, my People, the Children of *Israel*, out of the Land of Egypt by great Judgments. For since *Pharaoh* hath already begun to harden his own Heart (in contemptuously saying, Who is the Lord, that I should obey his Voice, to let *Israel* go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let *Israel* go, Chap. 5. 2. and hath increased their Burdens thereupon, ver. 6.) I will now harden *Pharaoh's* Heart (or suffer him to go on still to harden his Heart yet more;) that I may multiply my Signs and my Wonders in the Land of Egypt.

When therefore *Pharaoh* shall say unto you, Shew a Miracle, to confirm your Message: Then shalt thou say unto *Aaron*, (for *Aaron* was to be the Agent, *Moses* the Director,) Take thy Rod, and cast it before *Pharaoh*; And it shall become a Serpent.

Thus instructed, *Moses* and *Aaron* went in unto *Pharaoh*, and delivered their Message, as the Lord had commanded them. Which *Pharaoh* not believing, *Aaron* cast down his Rod before *Pharaoh*, and before his Servants; and it became a Serpent.

Pharaoh, to confront this Miracle, calls the Wise Men of Egypt, and the Sorcerers (Two of which, who probably were the most eminent of the Company, are by the Apostle Named *Jannes* and *Jambres*, 2 Tim. 3. 8. not from any Place of the old Testament, But from some other Record, or Tradition of the Jews, says Dr. Hammond on the Place.

These Magicians of Egypt (whose Names signify a Supplanter, and a Rebel) as a further means to harden *Pharaoh's* Heart, were suffered to do in like manner with or by their Enchantments, as *Aaron* had done by God's immediate Power. For they casting down every Man his Rods, their Rods became (in shew, at least, and appearance) Serpents. Yet there was Difference enough between these, and that which *Aaron's* Rod produced: For *Aaron's* Rod swallowed up their Rods. This had been sufficient to have convinced *Pharaoh*, had not his hardening his Heart blinded his Judgment, so that he would not see the Difference: And the Blinding his Judgment hardened his Heart, so that he would not let *Israel* go.

Now tho' this was a Miracle, and a great Miracle; yet it was but a Miracle: It was not a Plague, it brought no outward Damage to King or People, which is that which most immediately strikes the Senses. Wherefore the Lord resolved now to begin his Plagues upon Egypt. And having observed unto *Moses*, that *Pharaoh's* Heart was hardened, so that he refused to let *Israel* go, he bid him take the Rod, which had been turned to a Serpent, and go take up his Standing, in the Morning, by the River's brink, against *Pharaoh* should come out to go unto the Water. And then (said he) shalt thou say unto him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my People go, that they may serve me in the Wilderness; and behold hitherto thou wouldst not hear. Thus saith the Lord, In (or by) this thou shalt know that I

am

am the Lord. Behold, I will smite with the Rod, that is in mine Hand, upon the Waters which are in the River, and they shall be turned to Blood: Exod. 8. And the Fish that is in the River shall die, and the River shall stink; and the Egyptians shall loath to drink of the Water of the River.

Accordingly Aaron, receiving the Rod from Moses, lifted it up at God's Command, and therewith smote the Waters that were in the River, in the sight of Pharaoh, and of his Servants; and *all the Waters* that were in the River were turned to Blood. This had its Influence upon all the Streams, Rivers, Ponds, Pools of the Egyptians; and by the Conduits and Aqueducts, whereby their Houses were served with Water, their Cisterns, or other Vessels, whether of Wood, or of Stone, were filled with Blood: So that there was Blood over all the Land of Egypt. The Fish also in the River died, and the River stunk; So that the Egyptians could not drink of the Water of the River, but were forced to dig round about, where they could, to find Water to drink. And this Plague lay upon them seven Days together.

Now because Moses was known to have been bred up in the Learning of the Egyptians; and to be Skilful therein, Pharaoh suspected all this to be done by Art Magical. Wherefore calling again for the Magicians of Egypt, he put them to try their Skill; and they, taking some of the Water which the Egyptians had found by digging, did by their Enchantments make him believe that they turned it to Blood. This served to harden Pharaoh's Heart yet further; so that he would not hearken to Moses and Aaron: But turning from them, went into his House, not regarding this any more than the former Miracle of the Rod turned into a Serpent.

But the Lord resolving now to follow him close, as soon as the seven Days were ended that this Plague lasted, sent Moses to him again, with this Message. *Thus saith the Lord, Let my People go, that they may serve me. And if thou refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all thy Borders with Frogs. The River shall bring forth Frogs abundantly; which shall go up (out of the River) and shall come into thine House, and into thy Bed-chamber, and upon thy Bed, and into the Houses of thy Servants, and into the Ovens, and into the Kneading-troughs: Nay, they shall come upon thee thy self too, and upon thy People, and upon all thy Servants.*

This was the second Plague denounced: Which Pharaoh not regarding, God bad Moses give order to Aaron to stretch forth his Hand, with the Rod in it, over the Streams, the Rivers and the Ponds of Egypt. Aaron thereupon stretching forth the Rod over the River Nile, which affected all the Streams, Rivers, Ponds and Waters of Egypt, the Frogs came up in such abundance that they covered the Land.

Now again had Pharaoh recourse to his Magicians, who by their Enchantments so deceived his sight, that he thought they brought up Frogs also; Which again helped to harden him.

This was doubtless a very loathsome Plague; to have Frogs leaping and crawling about in ones Chamber, upon ones Bed: Yea upon ones self, and in the Dough-troughs. How long it continued upon the Egyptians is not certain: But certain it is, that it continued so long, that it made Pharaoh weary. Tho' his Magicians could juggle up false Frogs, yet they could not send away the true Frogs. But Pharaoh was glad to send for Moses and Aaron, and capitulate with them. *Intreat the Lord (said he) that he may take away the Frogs from me, and from my People; and I will let the People go, that they may do Sacrifice unto the Lord. This is the First Concession, or Grant, that was gain'd from Pharaoh.*

Exod. 8. Well, said Moses to Pharaoh, Set a time when I shall intreat for thee, and for thy Servants, and for thy People, to destroy the Frogs from thee, and thy Houses, that they may remain in the River only: And if it be not done, glory over me. Let it be to morrow, said Pharaoh. It shall be so, replied Moses, according to thy word; that thou mayest know, that there is none like unto JEHOVAH our God. To morrow therefore the Frogs shall depart, and shall remain in the River only.

As soon therefore as Moses and Aaron were gone from Pharaoh, Moses prayed unto the Lord to remove the Frogs which he had brought against Pharaoh; and the Lord answered his Prayer, so that the Frogs died out of the Houses, Villages and Fields: And the Egyptians gathered them into Heaps; where they lay, till the Land stank of them.

But when Pharaoh saw that there was Respite, (that he was freed from this Plague, and another did not immediately follow,) he hardened his Heart, and hearkened not unto them, as the Lord had foretold he would do (ch. 7. 4.)

Hitherto the Lord had denounced his Judgments to Pharaoh beforehand, and given him warning, that he might escape them. But now, since Pharaoh had broken Promise with him, he held him unworthy of such a Treatment. Wherefore, without taking notice now of Pharaoh, he bid Moses direct Aaron to stretch out his Rod, and smite the Dust of the Land, that it might become Lice, Aaron did so; and all the Dust became Lice in Man, and in Beast, throughout all the Land of Egypt.

Here was now a lousie Nation, and now the Magicians went to work, to try what they could do with their Enchantments: But all their Art was not worth a Louse; they who had turned their Rods into Serpents; Water into Blood; and had brought up Frogs; could not with all their juggling Skill, bring forth Lice: But were forced to yield, and confess unto Pharaoh, that this was the Finger of God. Yet Pharaoh's Heart was so hardened, that he hearkened not unto Moses and Aaron.

Which notwithstanding, the Lord yet again condescended to give him another Summons. Rise up (said God to Moses) early in the Morning, and stand before Pharaoh, when he comes forth to the Water, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Let my People go, that they may serve me. Else, I will send swarms of Flies (in the Margin, a Mixture of Noisom Beasts) upon thee, and upon thy Servants, and upon thy People, and into thy Houses; and the Houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of Flies, and also the Ground whereon they are. And (that thou mayst know, that this is brought as a Judgment upon thee and thy People, for your Oppressing my People, thou shalt see) I will wonderfully sever in that Day the Land of Goshen, in which my People dwell, from the rest of Egypt, that no swarms of Flies shall be there. And I will put a Division (Distinction, or Token of Redemption) between my People and thy People; to the end thou mayst know that I am JEHOVAH in the midst of the Earth: And to Morrow shall this sign be. Accordingly, Pharaoh not submitting, the Lord did as he had said; and there came a grievous swarm of Flies into the House of Pharaoh, and into his Servant's Houses, and into all the Land of Egypt, so that the Land was corrupted, by reason of the Flies.

Now had the Magicians so lost their Credit, having been foiled before by a Louse, that they were not consulted in this Case. But this Plague being very grievous (whether we consider it simply, as a Swarm of Flies only, but in abundant quantity; or, as a Mixture of Flies and all other hurtful Insects, or of venomous Beasts, as Serpents, Adders, Snakes, &c.) Pharaoh, not able to endure it, called directly for Moses and Aaron, and

and in a discontented Tone, said to them, *Go ye, Sacrifice to your God; but in this Land.* Willing he was to have *Ease*: But unwilling to part *Exod. 8.* with the People, of whom he made so great *Advantage*. And being an *Egyptian*, a *Stranger*, an *Enemy* to the true God, he did not understand that the true *Israelites* could not Sacrifice to God acceptably, while under *Bondage* in *Egypt*. *They must come out of Egypt, that will worship God aright.*

Moses however discreetly laid it, so as rather to convince Pharaoh, than provoke him. *It is not meet, said he, so to do, viz. to Sacrifice to our God in this Land. For we shall Sacrifice the Abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God* (that is, we shall sacrifice those Creatures which they worship for Gods, as the Ox and Sheep, and it will be abominable to them to see us sacrifice their Gods to our God:) *Shall we Sacrifice the Abomination of the Egyptians before their Eyes, and will they not stone us? Therefore we will go three Days Journey into the Wilderness, and Sacrifice to the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us.*

Well, said Pharaoh, if nothing else will serve you, but to go into the Wilderness, I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the Wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away: Now therefore entreat for me.

Tho' Moses had not much Confidence in Pharaoh, yet that he might be tryed to the utmost, he answered him, I will entreat the Lord, that the Swarms of Flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his Servants, and from his People, to morrow: But (added he) *let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more, in not letting the People go to Sacrifice to the Lord.*

Accordingly Moses, being gone out from Pharaoh, entreated the Lord; and the Lord heard him, and removed the Swarms of Flies from Pharaoh, from his Servants, and his People; so that there remained not one. But Pharaoh, notwithstanding the Caution given him by Moses, did deal deceitfully again: For hardening his Heart still more and more, he would not yet let the People go.

For this high Provocation, Pharaoh and his People must yet feel more Plagues. Therefore God sent Moses to him again, and bid him tell him, *Exod. 9.* Thus saith Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, *Let my People go, that they may serve me. For if thou refuse to let them go, and wilt hold them still, Behold, to Morrow the Hand of the Lord shall be upon thy Cattel, which are in the Field, upon the Horses, the Asses, the Camels, the Oxen and the Sheep, by a very grievous Murrain. And the Lord will put a wonderful difference between the Cattel of Israel, and the Cattel of Egypt: For there shall nothing die of all that belongs to the Children of Israel.*

Accordingly, Pharaoh still standing out, on the Morrow, (which was the time God had set) *all the Cattel of Egypt that were in the Field died.* Pharaoh thereupon sent to Goshen, to learn how the *Israelites* had sped: And he found there was not one of the Cattel of the *Israelites* dead. By this he might have seen, that it was not a Casualty; but a Divine Judgment upon him, exactly answering the Prediction: Yet his Heart being hardened, he did not let the People go.

Since therefore he took so little regard of the Warnings given him, God poured forth another Plague upon him without warning. For Moses and Aaron, by God's appointment, taking handfuls of Ashes from the Furnace, and Moses sprinkling them towards Heaven, in the sight of Pharaoh, *It became a Boil, breaking forth in Blains, upon Man and Beast, throughout all the Land of Egypt.* And so grievous it was, that the Magicians (who perhaps now would once again have tried their Skill, to see if they could have regained their Credit) *could not stand before Moses, because of the Boils: For the Boils were upon the Magicians*

Exod. 9. *ans themselves, as well as upon all the rest of the Egyptians. Yet Pharaoh having from the first hardened his Heart against the Lord, was now judicially hardened by the Lord, so that he hearkened not unto his Servants.*

This Sixth Plague not prevailing, God sent a Thundering Message to Pharaoh, to fore-warn him of a *thundring* Plague at hand. Rise up early in the Morning (said the Lord to Moses) and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, *Thus saith JEHOVAH, the God of the Hebrews: Let my People go, That they may serve me. For (if thou dost not) I will at this time (and henceforward) send all my Plagues upon thine Heart; (not only Frogs, Lice, Boils in thy Skin, but that which shall pierce thee to the very Heart :) And upon thy Servants, and upon thy People will I send them, that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the Earth. If when lately I smote the Cattel with Murrain, I had then smitten thee and thy People with the Pestilence, thou hadst been cut off from the Earth. But for this Cause have I let thee remain, that I may shew thee my Power, and publish my Name throughout all the Earth. Dost thou yet exalt thy self against my People, that thou wilt not let them go? Behold, to morrow about this time (if thou dost not submit in the mean while I will cause it to rain a very grievous Hail such as hath not been in Egypt since the Foundation thereof (since Egypt was Peopled) until now. Send therefore now, and gather thy Cattel, and all that thou hast in the Field (those Cattel, which not being in the Field before had escaped the Plague of Murrain, ver. 3.) For upon every Man and Beast which shall be found in the Field, and shall not be brought home, the Hail shall fall, so that they shall die.*

Tho' hardened Pharaoh did not so much regard this threatening Message, as to take Care of himself and his People, by giving publick Order to fetch home and secure their Servants and Cattel: Yet such, among his Courtiers and Officers, as feared the Word of the Lord, hastened to get their Servants and Cattel into the Houses; by which means they were preserved. But they that regarded not the Word of the Lord, left their Servants and Cattel in the Fields, and sped accordingly.

For when the set-time was come, and Pharaoh still stood out, Moses, by God's command, stretching forth his Rod towards Heaven, the Lord sent Thunder and Hail, mingled with fiery Coruscations, which ran along upon the Ground, and were so terrible, that the like had never been in Egypt, since it became a Nation. For throughout all the Land of Egypt, the Hail smote all that was in the Field, not only Man and Beast, but it smote also every Herb of the Field, and it brake every Tree of the Field. The Flax and the Barly in particular were smitten; for the Barly was in the Ear, and the Flax was balled: But the Wheat and the Rye escaped, because they were not grown up. Mean while, in the Land of Goshen only, where the Children of Israel were, there was no Hail.

The Loss and Damage that Egypt sustained by this Plague, not only in the Persons killed, and Cattel slain, but in the Fruits and Trees destroyed thereby, must needs be very great. But so great was the Terror, that the Thunder, Hail, and running Fire, struck into Pharaoh's mind, that it made him bow, beyond what all the former Plagues had done. So that calling for Moses and Aaron, he said unto them, *I have sinned now. JEHOVAH is Righteous; and I and my People are Wicked. This is the first Confession we find he ever made: And this being made in a Fright, held no longer than the Fear lasted. Then going on, Intreat the Lord (said he) that there be no more mighty Thundrings (which in the Hebrew are called Voices of God) and Hail: and I will let you go, ye shall stay no longer.*

Well,

Well, said *Moses*, as soon as I am gone out of the City, I will spread abroad my hands unto the Lord, *The Thunder shall cease, and there shall be no more Hail; that thou mayest know that the Earth is JEHOVAH's.* But as for thee, and thy Servants, I know before hand that ye will not fear the Lord God. Exod. 10.

However, when *Moses* was come out of the City from *Pharaoh*; and had entreated the Lord, the *Thunders, Hail, and Rain* ceased. And when *Pharaoh* saw that, he sinned yet more, and hardened his Heart, both he and his Servants; and would not let the Children of *Israel* go.

Pharaoh, thus hardening his Heart against the Lord, provoked the Lord to harden him yet further, to his Destruction, in the end.

Of this the Lord gave *Moses* notice; *I have hardened his Heart*, said he, and the Heart of his Servants, that I might shew these my Signs before him; and that thou mayest tell, in the hearing of thy Son, and thy Son's Son, (that is, that the *Israelites* may tell their Children from one Generation to another) what wonderful things I have wrought in *Egypt*, and my Signs, which I have done amongst them: That ye may know that I am JEHOVAH.

Wherefore (added the Lord unto *Moses*) Go in unto *Pharaoh* again, and say unto him, *Thus saith JEHOVAH, the God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thy Self before me? Let my People go, that they may serve me. Else I will bring the Locusts* (a sort of Grasshoppers) *into thy Coasts to morrow; and they shall cover the Face of the Earth so thick, that one cannot be able to see the Earth. And they shall eat the Residue of that which did escape, and which remaineth unto you from the Hail* (to wit, the Wheat and the Rye, Chap. 9. 32.) *and the Fruit of every Tree, which groweth for you out of the Field, shall they eat: And they shall fill thy House, and the Houses of all thy Servants, and the Houses of all the Egyptians.* And such a Plague shall this prove, as neither thy Fathers, nor thy Father's Fathers, have ever seen, since the Day that they first came upon the Earth unto this Day.

When *Moses* had denounced this Judgment, he turned away, and went out from *Pharaoh*. But as soon as he was gone, the Courtiers said to *Pharaoh*, *How long shall this Man be a snare to us? Let the Men go that they may serve the Lord their God. Hast thou a mind to hear first that Egypt is destroyed?* Upon this, *Moses* and *Aaron* were fetcht back to *Pharaoh*, and he said unto them, *Go serve JEHOVAH your God.* Then recalling himself: *But who are they* (said he) *that shall go?* We will all go, said *Moses*; with our Young and our Old, our Sons and our Daughters, our Flocks, and our Herds, will we go: For we must hold a Feast unto *Jehovah*; and both old and young must be at it.

This put *Pharaoh* out of all Patience; so that breaking out, by way of Imprecation, upon them, he said, *may Jehovah be so with you, as I will let you go on those terms! Not so* (added he) *not you and your Little ones; but go ye that are Men, and serve JEHOVAH: For, that you did desire.* (Whereby he would suggest, though falsely, that, they asked more now than they did at first.) Therefore, said he, *Look to it* (consider well what ye insist on:) *For evil is before you.* And with this Threat they, (who before used to go out) were now driven out from *Pharaoh's* presence.

Moses thereupon, being thus thrust out, did by God's command, stretch forth his Rod over the Land of *Egypt*; and the Lord brought an Eastwind upon the Land all that Day, and all the following Night: And by next Morning, the East-wind brought the Locusts. These Lo-

Exod. 10. *custs* went up over all the Land of *Egypt*, and rested in all the Coasts of *Egypt*, so thick that they covered the Face of the Earth, so that the Land was darkened by them. And so grievous they were, that they did eat every *Herb* of the Land, and all the *Fruit* of the Trees, which the *Hail* had left: So that *there remained not any green thing* in the Trees, or in the Herbs of the Field, throughout all the Land of *Egypt*.

The sense *Pharaoh* had of the tendency of this Plague (which by destroying the Food, must in time destroy both Man and Beast) made him *relent*. Wherefore calling hastily for *Moses* and *Aaron*, he said, *I have sinned against JEHOVAH your God, and against you; (against him, in refusing so long to obey his Command: Against you, in breaking my Word so often with you.) Yet forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once; and intreat JEHOVAH your God, that he may take away from me this Death only.*

Moses thereupon, going out from *Pharaoh*, intreated the Lord, and the Lord turned a mighty strong West-wind; which took away the *Locusts*, and cast them into the Red-Sea. But God had *not yet done* with *Pharaoh*. *Pharaoh's Disobedience, and Contempt of God, deserved yet more Correction: Wherefore the Lord hardened his Heart, so that he would not let the Children of Israel go.*

Then said the Lord to *Moses*, *stretch out thine hand towards Heaven, that there may be Darkness over the Land of Egypt, even Darkness so thick that it may be felt.* *Moses* thereupon stretching forth his hand towards Heaven, there came so thick a Darkness over all the Land of *Egypt*, that for the space of three days (which time it lasted) *they neither saw one another, nor did any one of them arise from his place: But all the Children of Israel had Light in their Dwellings.*

This was a long Night to the *Egyptians*; and proved so *uneasie* to *Pharaoh*, that calling unto *Moses*, he said, *Go ye, serve JEHOVAH.* And that he might advance one step further than before, and yet keep a Reserve, he added, *Let your Little Ones also go with you: Only Let your Flocks and your Herds be staid behind.*

Nay, replied *Moses*, *Thou hadst more need give us Sacrifices and Burnt-Offerings, that we may Sacrifice unto JEHOVAH our God. However, Our Cattel to be sure shall go with us; there shall not an Hoofe be left behind: For thereof must we take to serve JEHOVAH our God; and we know not with what we must serve him, until we come thither. This was an apt Type of Gospel-Worship.*

Exod. 11. This Proposition, of taking all their Substance with them, offended *Pharaoh* to that degree, that in great Displeasure he said to *Moses*, *Get thee from me, and look to thy self; and come no more at me: For if thou comest to me again, thou shalt die.*

Well, said *Moses*, *let it be as thou hast said.* I'll come no more after thee. But (the Lord having before told *Moses*, that he would bring one Plague more upon *Pharaoh*, and upon *Egypt*, in the slaying of the First-born there; which should make him not only let the People go, but thrust them out) *Moses* not intending to see *Pharaoh* any more, denounced this Judgment to him before he parted from him. *Thus saith JEHOVAH, About Midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt, and all the First-born in the Land of Egypt shall die, from the First-born of Pharaoh, that should succeed him in the Throne, unto the First-born of the Maid-servant, that is behind the Mill (that is, the meanest Servants, who were wont to be put to grind at the Mill; which they did by thrusting the Mill before them, while they stood behind it:) And also (added Moses) all the First-born of Beasts, shall die.*

And

And to possess Pharaoh, and his Servants, with the greater Fear, he told them, There should be *such a Cry throughout all the Land of Egypt*, as the like never had been, nor should be. And to shew them how still and quiet the Children of Israel should be, while the Egyptians were under this *Fright and Turmoil*, he using a *proverbial Speech*, tells them, *A Dog shall not Bark at any of the Children of Israel, either at Man or Beast*; that they might take notice, how great a Difference the Lord puts between the Egyptians and the Israelites. Then he tells Pharaoh, that the *Terror of this Plague* shall so strike the Egyptians, that those Servants of his which then attended him (his Counsellors, and prime Ministers of State) should come and bow down to him (Moses) and intreat him, and his People, to be gone: And after that, said he, *I will go out*. And having thus delivered his last Message to Pharaoh, he departed from him in a warm Zeal.

Godwyn, in his *Moses and Aaron*, l. 3. ch. 1. tells us, That the Israelites, till they had been Captives in *Babylon* (which was, as I take it, about Eight Hundred Years after they came out of *Egypt*) counted their Months without any Name, according to the Number; the *First, Second, Third Month*, &c. And that, before their coming out of *Egypt*, they began their Year in that Month, which was afterwards called *Tisri* (which took in part of the *Seventh*, and part of the *Eighth Month* with us;) and they continued always after to begin their Year with that Month for Civil Affairs. According to which Computation, that Month, which was afterwards called *Nisan*, in which God delivered his *Israel* out of *Egypt*, was their *Seventh*. But in Honour of that great Work, God appointed (*Exod. 12. 2.*) that this should be the beginning of Months, the *First Month in the Year to them*; that is with respect to their most Solemn Feasts, and Religious Affairs. And this *Nisan* answers to part of those two Months which, from the Heathen Romans, are commonly called *March* and *April*.

It was on the *Fourteenth* day of this *First Month*, that *Moses* took his leave of *Pharaoh*. And God, having predetermined his People's deliverance at that time; had some days before Instituted the *Passover*, and given Direction to *Moses* how it should be observed. Which (to speak of it briefly, and in a general way) was thus.

Every Family of *Israel* (or, if the Family was too little, two Neighbouring Families joyning together) was, on the *Tenth* day of this Month, to take a Lamb, or Kid, and shut it up till the *Fourteenth* day of this Month; and then it was to be killed. The Lamb, or Kid, must be a Male, of the *First* year, and without Blemish (and therein a Type of *Christ*, who was without Sin.) When it was killed, they were to take a Bunch of Hyssop, and dipping it in the Blood (which for that end was saved in a Vessel) they were therewith to strike the Lintel, or upper-Door-post, and the Side-posts of the Outer-door of every House where they did eat it: And they were not to stir out of their Houses that Night until the next Morning. This was done to the intent, that when the Angel of God should go from House to House throughout *Egypt*, to slay the First-born of both Man and Beast of the Egyptians, he seeing the strokes of Blood at the Door, might pass over the Houses wherein the Israelites were eating the Lamb, or Kid, without doing them any hurt. And from the Angel's thus Passing over their Houses, this Institution was called the *Passover*. The Lamb was to be eaten neither raw, nor sodden; but roasted with Fire: and it was to be dressed whole in a piece, not divided into joynts or parts; nor might a Bone thereof be broken. It was to be eaten with unleavened Bread, and with bitter Herbs, in memorial of the bitter Bondage

Exod. 12. Bondage they had undergone in *Egypt*. What remained of it, that was more than could be eaten, was to be burnt with Fire. And no *Stranger* might eat of it, unless he were *Circumcised*. They were (at this time only) to eat it *hastily*, having their *Loins girded*, their *Shoes on their Feet*, and their *Staff in their Hand*. Which Ceremonies shewed their *eager Desire* of Deliverance, and their *Readiness* for it.

All things being thus prepared for their Departure, at *Midnight the Lord smote all the First-born in the Land of Egypt*, from the First-born of *Pharaoh*, to the First-born of the Captive that was in the Dungeon (those meaner Servants, that were put to Grinding, as *Samson* afterwards was, when he had lost at once both his Liberty and his Eyes, *Judg. 16. 21.*) And all the *First-born* of Cattel were smitten also, as the Lord had but that Morning denounced by *Moses* to *Pharaoh*.

This brought an *horrible Fright* upon *Pharaoh*, and upon the *Egyptians* in general. Up they all got in the Night, and a lamentable *Uproar* was among them. A general and *grievous Out-cry* ran through *Egypt*: For there was not an House (that had a *First-born* of either Man or Beast belonging to it) where there was not at least one dead. Both *Pharaoh*, and his Servants, were now afraid in earnest that *their turns would be next*. Wherefore *Moses* and *Aaron* were called upon in the Night, and commanded to be gone with all speed. *Rise up, and get you forth* (said *Pharaoh*) *from amongst my People, both you, and the Children of Israel; and go serve J E H O V A H, as ye have said: Also take your Flocks and your Herds, according to your own Demands, and be gone. I'll stand no longer upon Terms with you: Only bless me; that is, pray for me, that this Plague may go no farther.*

The *Egyptians* also were *urgent* upon the People, that they might send them out of the Land *in haste*: For they said (one to another) *We be all dead Men else.*

Now *Moses* having, by God's Command (expressed in *chap. 11. ver. 2, 3.*) directed the Children of *Israel* to borrow, every one of their *Egyptian* Neighbours, *Jewels* of Silver and of Gold, and *Raiment*; and the Lord having disposed and inclined the *Egyptians*, to lend them what they asked for: They by this means *spoiled* the *Egyptians* of their best things. A Practice (how *excusable*, or *justifiable* soever in them, on the Account that God, who is the *Sovereign Lord* of all, both Persons and Things, did at that time so order it; and that it might be looked on as a *just Retribution* to the *Egyptians*, for the *Irreparable Injuries* they had done to the *Israelites*) *not to be drawn into Example.*

So *urgent* now were the *Egyptians* upon the People of *Israel*, to have them gone, that they were fain to tie up their Dough in Clothes, and carry it away at their Backs unbaked. Thus after *Egypt* was in a manner destroyed, and the *Egyptians* of all Ranks had suffered so deeply, rather than they would part with them; they now, all on a sudden, *Thrust them out* (as God had foretold they would, *ch. 11. 1.*) and Drive them away in haste.

Yet did not the Haste make *Moses* forget to take with him *the Bones* of *Joseph*, (*ch. 13. 19.*) which he, dying in the Faith of their Deliverance, had solemnly engaged the Children of *Israel* to carry up out of *Egypt* with them (*Gen. 50. 25.*) and which had now lain Encoffined in *Egypt* more than an Hundred and Fourty Years.

A. M. 2473. The Place of general Rendezvous for the *Israelites* was *Rameses*, the chief City in the Land of *Goshen*. From whence on the Fifteenth Day of their First Month (afterwards called *Nisan*, and *Abib*, (which takes in part of the *First*, and part of the *Second* Month with us) they set forward as a *well ordered Army*, in Rank and File, being about Six hundred

hundred thousand Men, in number, on foot, besides Children, and marched to Succoth. And with them went up a *mixed Multitude*, that were *Exod. 12* not *Israelites*, but Strangers, of divers Nations, who having seen the Calamities that Egypt had Suffered for *Israel's* Sake, chose rather to seek their Livelihoods among the *Israelites*, than tarry in a Country made already almostly desolate.

Here, while their Deliverance was fresh in Memory, God by Moses commanded the People of *Israel*, that when they should be brought into the Land of *Canaan*, they should set apart, and devote unto the Lord their First-born, both of Man and Beast, in Remembrance that God, for their Sakes, had slain all the First-born of Egypt.

Being now to disjodge from Succoth, the Lord (who for their Encouragement and Safety, went before them, by Day-time, in a Pillar of Cloud, and by Night in a Pillar of Fire, to direct and guide them in the Way they should go) would not lead them through the Way of the Land of the *Philistines*, (though that was near) lest when they should see the *Philistines in Arms*, to stop their Passage, and give them Battel, (which they had never yet been used to,) they should repent their coming out, and wilfully return back again to Egypt.

Wherefore God led them about through the Way of the Wilderness of the Red-Sea. And so Marching to *Etham*, they encamped there, in the Edge of the Wilderness, which took it's Name from that Place.

From thence drawing them down more to the Red-Sea, he caused *Exod. 14* them to encamp there, between the Straits of the Mountains, having the Sea before them. This he did as a Stratagem, to entice Pharaoh, to pursue them, from the Prospect he might have of Advantage from the Place; that he might yet more fully Triumph over him. For the Lord had told Moses, that Pharaoh would say, *They were entangled in the Wilderness*; and that he would harden Pharaoh's Heart, that he should pursue them, and be destroyed: And it succeeded accordingly.

For after the Egyptians had buried their slain First-born, Pharaoh, being told that the *Israelites* fled; and concluding, from their long and speedy Marches, that they did fly, repented that he had let them go, and with all the Forces he could so suddenly raise, put himself upon the Pursuit, in order to reduce them to his Subjection again. He had with him Six Hundred chosen Chariots, and all the Chariots of Egypt besides (that could be got ready at so short Warning) with the Captains over them, and his Horsemen. And pursuing them hotly, on the Sixth Day after their Departure out of Egypt, he found them encamped by the Sea.

The Sight of his Army, and of their old Oppressor at the Head of of it, struck Terror in the poor *Israelites*, before it came at them. See here an Instance of Human Frailty, and of Depressed Courage. They cried unto God, it is true: But it is doubtful rather through Fear, than Faith, by their falling foully upon Moses; whom most ungratefully they reproached, as the Author of this great Misfortune. *Because there were no Graves in Egypt* (said they to him) *hast thou taken us from thence to die in the Wilderness? Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the Word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to have served the Egyptians, than that we should die here in the Wilderness.* Whereas by a free and generous Mind, Death any where, and almost any how, would be preferred to so base and ignominious a Bondage, as they were now come out off. But their Necks, by long Custom, were hardened to the Yoke; and the continual Slavery of their Bodies had, in length of time, imbased their Spirits.

Exod. 14. Good *Moses*, not resenting their injurious Taunts, endeavoured to cheer them up, bidding them *not fear*, but *be still in their Minds*; and *ye shall see* (said he) *the Salvation of the Lord*, which he will show you this Day: for the Lord will fight for you, (if ye will be quiet) and the Egyptians, whom ye have now seen, ye shall never see more.

Nor did *Moses* only thus encourage them; but (though we read not what he said) it is evident that he cried earnestly to the Lord, on their Behalf: For the Lord said to him, *Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the Children of Israel, that they go forward.*

Little heart surely could they have to go forward, when they saw nothing but Sea to go into. But God requires neither *Impossibilities*, nor over great *Hardships* of his People. Therefore he said to *Moses*, *Lift thou up thy Rod, and stretch out thy Hand over the Sea, and divide it; and the Children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the Sea; And I, behold I will harden the Heart of the Egyptians, that they shall follow them; and I will get me Honour upon Pharaoh and all his Host.*

Now did the Angel of God, which went before the Camp of Israel in the Pillar of a Cloud, remove and go behind them; by which Means it came between the two Camps, and kept them apart all the Night: And the Cloudy Side being next the Egyptians, cast a *Darkness* towards them; but the Fiery Side being next to the Israelites, gave them *Light*.

When therefore *Moses* had stretched out his Rod over the Sea, and the Lord had thereupon, by a mighty East-wind, caused the Sea to flow back all that Night, and had thereby divided the Waters, so that the Sea became *Dry-land*, the Children of Israel went into the Sea upon the *Dry-ground*. Which the Egyptians observing (and not suspecting but that they might safely follow, with their Chariots and Horsemen, where the others, being but Foot-men, with Women and Children, went before) they, eager of Pursuit, went in after them, to the midst of the Sea.

But when in the *Morning-Watch* (which is reckoned to begin at the Third, and reach to the Sixth Hour in the Morning) the Lord had looked, through the Pillar of Fire and Cloud, upon the Egyptians, and throwing their Chariots off their Wheels, had disordered the Egyptian Host, and made them drive heavily; the Egyptians saw their Error; and said one to another, *Let us flee from the Face of Israel; for J E H O V A H fighteth for them, against the Egyptians.*

But it was now too late to flee. For *Moses* at God's Command, stretching out his Hand (with the Rod) over the Sea, the Sea returned to its Strength, and when the Morning appeared, the Egyptians flying against it, the Lord overthrew them in the midst of the Sea: And the Waters returning covered the Chariots and the Horsemen, and all the Host of Pharaoh, that came into the Sea after them: so that not one of them remained alive.

But the Children of Israel walked upon dry Land in the midst of the Sea, and the Waters were a Wall unto them on either hand, until they came to the Shore; and *Joshua* who travelled with them plainly saith, *For the Lord your God dried up the Waters of Jordan from before you, until you were passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red-Sea which he dried up before us, until we were gone over,*

* Inserted
and argued
since
the first
Impres-
sion.

Josh. 4. 23. * So that whatever Opinion or Notion any Learned Men may have, as supposing that Israel came out again on the same Shore of the Red-Sea on which they went in. 'Tis plain by *Joshua's* Account, that they passed over the Red-Sea, as well as over Jordan, whereunto divers other Scriptures agree; as *Neh. 9. 11. Isa. 51. 10. Psal. 66. 6. and 78. 13. 53. and 106. 9. and 114. 3. 5.*

Thus

Thus did the Lord save *Israel* that Day out of the Hand of the *Egyptians*: And *Israel* saw the *Egyptians* dead upon the Sea-shore. And the People, having seen that great Work, which the Lord had wrought (for them) against the *Egyptians*, feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his Servant *Moses*.

Being now safely got to Shore again, *Moses* and the Children of *Israel*, Exod. 15. in grateful Acknowledgment of and Thanks for their Deliverance, did sing unto the Lord that *Triumphant Song*, which is set down in Chap. 15. from Ver. 1, to 20. And which in the *Apocalyps* has the Honour to be joined to the Song of the *Lamb*, Rev. 15. 3.

Miriam also, the *Prophetess*, Sister to *Aaron* and *Moses*, taking a Timbril in her Hand, and followed by the *Israelitish* Women, with Timbrils and with Dances, answered the Men, in repeating alternately some Parts of the same Song.

This Song of *Thanksgiving* and *Praise* being finished, *Moses* led the Children of *Israel* from the *Red-Sea*, which hath generally been held to have taken the Name from the Colour of the Sands, tincturing the Water with *Redness*, or from the Reeds, or Rushes, growing therein, of a *Redish* Hue: Dr. Gell, (in his *Essay* towards the Amendment of the *Last English Translation* of the BIBLE, p. 219.) having said, That it was long believed to have had that Name from *Erythras*, *Erythrus*, or *Erythraus*, a (supposed) King of the Land near unto it; tells us, The Truth of the Story was, that this *Erythras* was *Esau*, who was called *Edom*, and in the *Greek*, ἐρυθρός, which signifies *Red*. Which Name *Esau* had; because he came out of his Mother's Womb *Red*; and was confirmed to him from his Insatiable Appetite after *Jacob's Red Pottage*. So that it seems, the *Doctor* would have that Sea to have taken the Epithete *Red*, from *Red Esau*, or *Edom* (which signifies *Bloody*, or *Red*) whose Posterity (he says) dwelt near that Sea. And this Antiquity (he tells us) hath been discovered to this latter Age, by a very Learned Man of our own Nation.

From the *Red-Sea*, *Moses* led them into the Wilderness of *Shur*, or *Etham*; in which they marched three Days, without finding any Water: Which, to so great an Army, in so hot a Country, and at that Season of the Year, must needs be greatly incommodious. At length they came where there was Water Enough; but that so bitter, that they could not drink of it: And from the *Bitterness* of the Waters, the Place took the Name *Marah*, which signifies *Bitterness*.

To want Water was hard: To have it, and yet want it, was Harder. To be extreamly Thirsty, extreamly desirous of Water to allay that Thirst, to see Water, have Water at hand; and yet, through the Ill Relish of the Water, not to be able to drink it, would encrease both to the Thirst and Dissatisfaction. So it did with them. The People murmured against *Moses*, asking him, *What they should drink?* It was but three or four Days since they so joyfully and thankfully sung to the Lord; since, having seen the powerful Hand of God upon their Oppressors, the *Egyptians*, they both feared the Lord, and believed (had Confidence in) Him and his Servant *Moses*: And now they are got to *Murmuring* already; which gave a Proof of their Temper.

Moses hereupon cried unto the Lord, and the Lord directed him to a Tree: Which when he had cast into the Waters, the Waters were made Sweet; so that the People could drink of them, and satisfy their Thirst.

From hence they marched to *Elim*, where they found better Accommodations: For there were *Twelve* Wells of Water, and *Seventy* Palm-Trees,

Trees, or Date-Trees; the *Fruit* of which were *profitable*, as well as the *Shade* pleasant to them. Here therefore it may be supposed, they made some stay: For when they removed from hence, and came into the Wilderness of *Sin*, which is between *Elim* and *Sinai*, it was the *Fifteenth* Day of the *Second* Month; which was just a Month from the Day on which they set forward out of *Egypt*.

Here again the whole Congregation fell to *Murmuring* against *Moses* and *Aaron*: The Sight of a *barren* Wilderness, and *Shortness* of Provisions withal, made them *distrust* God, and break forth into *indecent* Expressions. Would to God (said they, in their Discontent) *we had died by the Hand of the Lord in the Land of Egypt* (as some of the *Egyptians* did) *when we sat by the Flesh-pots, and did eat Bread to the full, (when we had plenty of good Viſuals:)* *For ye have brought us forth into this Wilderness, to kill this whole Assembly with Hunger.*

This ill *Treatment* of his Servants the Lord relented, as done unto himself. And *Moses* and *Aaron* let them know so. Your *Murmurings* (said they to them) *are not against us; but against the Lord (who) hath heard your Murmurings, and e're long ye shall know, that it was not we, but the Lord, that brought you out from the Land of Egypt: Whose Arm is not shortened, but that he can provide you Food here Miraculously, as well as he brought you hither by a Miracle.*

The Lord therefore having shewed his *Glory* in the *Cloud*, to manifest his *Power* to them, and told them by *Moses*, that at *Even* they should eat *Flesh*, and in the *Morning* be filled with *Bread*; caused the *Quailes* at *Evening* to come up so thick, that they covered the *Camp*, and afforded the *Israelites* *Flesh* enough. And in the *Morning*, when the *Dew* was gone, there lay upon the *Ground* a little white round thing, as small as an hoar *Frost*, and like *Coriander Seed* for *Shape*. Which when the *Children of Israel* saw, they said one to another, *What is this?* for they knew not what it was. But *Moses* told them, *That was the Bread, which the Lord had given them to eat.* And because the Word by which they asked, [*What is this*] was in their *Language*, *Man* (which signifies also, *Meat ready prepared*,) it was always afterwards called *Man*, or *Manna*: And it tasted like *Wafers made with Honey*.

Then did the Lord, by *Moses*, give *Direction*, how this *Manna* should be used. First, It was to be gathered *fresh every Morning*: In which respect it might be a *Type* of that *Heavenly Bread*, which *Christ* taught his *Disciples* to pray for, *Give us this Day our daily Bread*, *Matth. 6. 11.* All that was gathered was to be spent the *same Day*: That they might have their *Dependence daily*, and intirely upon *God*. And when some of them, whether out of *Curiosity* or *Diffidence* (that they might have a *Reserve*) kept some of it till the next *Morning*, it putrified and stank. They were to gather it by *Measure*, according to the *Number* of *Heads* in every *Family*. On the *Seventh-Day*, which was the *Sabbath*, there was *None* to be found. Therefore they were to gather a double *Proportion* on the *Sixth-Day*, and lay up part of it for the *Seventh-Day*: Which, being kept by *God's Appointment*, and for that *Use*, did not *Corrupt*.

This was to them instead of *Bread*, and of this they did eat *Forty Years*, until they came to the *Borders* of the *Land of Canaan*. And as a *Memorial* thereof, and that after *Generations* might see the *Bread*, wherewith he had fed their fore *Fathers* in the *Wilderness*, the Lord commanded that an *Omer* of this *Manna* (which was the *Proportion* allowed daily to one *Man*, and is computed to contain, of *English Measure*, *Three Pints* and an *Half-pint*, and a *Fifth-part* of an *Half-pint*,
God-

Godwyn's *Moses* and *Aaron*, (l. 6. c. 9.) should be put into a Pot, and be laid up before the Lord.

If any one has a mind to trace the People of *Israel* in their several *Stations* and *Removes*, he may find them particularly set down, in the 33d Chapter of *Numbers*. I intend to take notice, only of the chief *Accidents* and *Occurrences* that beset them in their Passage.

Their first Discontent which appeared (after they came out of the Red-sea) was for want of Water. When they had that, they murmured for want of Flesh. Both *Flesh* and *Bread* were given them in plenty; and now again they are ready already to *Mutiny* for want of Water. Exod. 17.

They came, in their Journeys, to a Place called *Rephidim*; where they had no Water to drink. They thereupon fell to Chiding with *Moses*, saying, Give us Water, that we may drink. Why (answered *Moses*) do you Chide with me? Wherefore do ye Tempt the Lord? They not regarding that, but feeling their own Thirst, went on in their *Murmuring* against *Moses*. Wherefore (said they) hast thou brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us, and our Children, and our Cattel with Thirst?

Good *Moses* was sorely grieved, and in his Grief cried unto the Lord, saying, What shall I do unto this People? They are almost ready to stone me.

The Lord had Compassion on *Moses*; and did also pity and bear with the People. Therefore he said to *Moses*, give Order to the People to March. And take thou thy Rod (wherewith thou smotedst the River) and take of the Elders of the People, with thee, and go thou on before: And behold, and I will stand before thee thereupon the Rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the Rock, and there shall come Water out of it, that the People may drink.

But by that time the *Israelites* were got ready to March, before they could get from *Rephidim*, they found other work to do. For an Army of the *Amalekites* (descended from *Amalek*, *Esau's* Grandson, *Gen.* 36. 12.) was at their Backs, ready to fall upon them. *Moses* thereupon ordered *Joshua*, (a valiant young Man, that always attended him) to draw out a Party of choice Men against the next Morning, and then offer battle to *Amalek*: And (said he) I will stand on the Top of the Hill, with the Rod of God in my Hand.

Accordingly *Joshua*, having drawn out his Men, *Moses*, in the Morning while the Battel was joyning, went up to the top of the Hill, having *Aaron* and *Hur* with him; and holding up the Rod of God, as an Ensign, in his Hand, *Israel*, taking Courage from thence, prevailed: But when, thro' weariness, he let his Hand down, *Amalek* prevailed.

Aaron therefore and *Hur*, observing that *Moses* his Hands, thro' a continued holding up the Rod successively, were grown heavy and weak, took a Stone, and laid it under him, so that he sat upon it; and they standing by him, one on the one side, and the other on the other side, held up his Hands steadily until the going down of the Sun: In which time *Joshua* routed the *Amalekites* Army, and put them to the Sword.

This good Success, in their first Martial Adventure, gave great Encouragement to *Joshua*, and the *Israelites*. And the Lord commanded *Moses* to write a Memorial of it in a Book, and rehearse it to *Joshua*, to animate him to future Service: For, said the Lord, I will utterly put out the Remembrance of *Amalek* from under Heaven. *Moses* thereupon building an Altar, whereon to offer Sacrifice of Thanksgiving to the Lord for this Victory, called it *Jehovah Nissi*, i. e. The Lord my Banner, because, said he, the Lord hath Sworn, that he will have War with *Amalek* from Generation to Generation.

They were now come near the Place, where God *first* appeared to
Exod. 18. *Moses* in the *Burning Bush*; and not far from the Place where *Jethro*,
Moses his Father-in-law, lived: Who having heard of all that God
 had done for *Moses*, and for his People *Israel*; and understanding they
 were now near him, took his Daughter *Zipporah*, (*Moses* his Wife)
 with their two Son, *Gershom* and *Eliezer*, and brought them to
 him at the *Israelitish* Camp. Where, after Mutual *Salutations* and
Embracings, *Moses* having given him a more particular Account of the
 Lord's Dealings with *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*, and of what had befallen
Israel in their Travel thither, *Jethro*, being a *devout* Man (as sprang
 from the Loins of *Abraham* by *Keturah*, tho' not of the Seed of Pro-
 mise) testified his *Joy* therefore, both by rendring *solemn Praise* to God,
 with Acknowledgment of his Sovereignty, and offering a *Burnt-Offer-*
ing, and *Sacrifices* of Thanksgiving to God: Wherein *Aaron*, and all
 the Elders of *Israel*, did joyn with him, and feast together.

While *Jethro* tarried there, he observed that *Moses* was overcharg-
Exod. 19. ed with the weight of Business, in Hearing and Judging all the Com-
 plaints, and little wrangling Differences of so great a People. Where-
 fore, being a wise and experienced Prince, he advised his Son-in-law
 to substitute certain subordinate Officers, well qualified, Men of *Abili-*
ty, Men of *Truth*, such as feared God and hated Covetousness, to be
 Rulers; some over Thousands, some over Hundreds, some over Fifties,
 and some over Tens, who should hear and end all the smaller Matters
 among the People, and refer the greater, and more weightier Causes
 only, unto him: Assuring him, that if, with God's Approbation, he did
 follow this Counsel, it would be better for both himself, and the Peo-
 ple. *Moses* liking well his Father's Advice, forthwith put it into Prac-
 tice, to the great ease both of himself, and the People. And *Jethro*,
 taking his leave of his Son-in-law, and the rest, returned to his own
 Land.

While *Israel* lay now encamped in the Wilderness of *Sinai*, before
 the Mount of God, the Lord there gave them the Law, in *Ten Com-*
mandments, thence called The Decalogue. The preparatory Solemnities
Chap. 20. thereunto, are particularly set down in the 19th Chapter of *Exodus*; and
 21. the Decalogue follows in *Chap. 20.* After which, follows divers *Judicial*
 22. Laws, and intermixed with some Ceremonial, and backed with Promises
 23. of Blessings upon Obedience, in *Chap. 21, 22, 23.* All which *Moses* wrote
 in a Book, and then read it to the People.

Which done, he, by God's Command, brought up *Aaron*, with his
 two Sons, *Nadab* and *Abihu*, and Seventy of the Elders of *Israel*, so
 near that they saw the God of *Israel* (that is, by the Glory exhibited,
 they were assured that God was Present there.) And this Privilege those
Israelitish Nobles had, that tho' they appeared, so near to the Divine
 Majesty; yet they were not smitten by it, but did survive the Sight.

But God having particular Service for *Moses*, commanded him to
 come up to him into the Mount, and tarry there; *Moses* therefore, tak-
 ing only *Joshua*, with him, went up into the Mount: Directing the Eld-
 ers to tarry for them, till they should come down again, and referring
 them to *Aaron* and *Hur* for Assistance, in any difficult Cause, that might
 be brought before them.

No sooner was *Moses* got up into the Mount of God, but a Cloud
 covered the Mount, and the Glory of the Lord abode upon it, like de-
 vouring Fire, in the sight of the Children of *Israel*: And here the Lord
 kept *Moses* forty Days and forty Nights. In which time he received
 the Tables of Stone, wherein God himself had written the Law; and
 he took Direction from God, and was instructed how the Tabernacle should
 be

be made, and all the *Vessels* and *Instruments* belonging thereunto; and the *Ark* of the Testimony, in which the Law should be kept; and the *Altar* with its Appurtenances; and how *Aaron* and his *Sons* should be Consecrated to the *Priest-hood*, and their *Priestly Garments* made; with divers other Particulars, set down at large in *Chapters*, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31. of *Exodus*. Whither I refer the Reader.

Exod. 24.
25.
26.
27.
28.
29.
30.
31.

While *Moses* was thus imployed in the Mount, *Aaron* and the People were worse imployed in the Camp. For the People, impatient of *Moses* his long Absence, when they saw he delayed to come down out of the Mount (he had been *forty Days* gone, and they knew not how many *forty Days* more he might stay:) They gathered themselves together unto *Aaron*, the most part of them, and said, Up, make us *Gods*, which shall go before us: For as for this *Moses* (the Man that brought us up out of the Land of Egypt) we know not what is become of him.

Aaron, who should have restrained them from this Madness, (and from whom better things might have been expected, having so lately been admitted to the sight of the Divine Glory,) too easily complied; and without reproofing, or expostulating with them, bid them Break off the *Golden Ear-rings*, which were in the Ears of their Wives and Children (which probably were the same they had borrowed of the Egyptians, *Exod.* 12. 35.) and bring them to him. They brought them; he received them; and melting them down into the Figure or Form of a Calf, fashioned it with a graving Tool. Which done, the People cry it up, These be (said they) thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the Land of Egypt.

Exod. 32.

If it be asked, why he made it in the Form of a Calf, rather than of another Creature? The Answer is, 'Tis Probable he did it in imitation of the Idol God, they had seen worshipped by the Egyptians, called *Apis*, *Serapis*, and *Osiris*; having the Form of an Ox or Bull, and (as some say) with a *Busbel* on its Head, in Memory both of *Pharaoh's* Dreams, and *Joseph's* Providence. See *Goodwyn's Moses and Aaron*, l. 4. c. 5. And *D'Assigny's History of Heathen Gods*, l. 2. p. 270. and l. 3. p. 38.

When *Aaron* saw how much the People were taken with their *Golden God*, he built an *Altar* before it, and proclaimed a Feast to be holden next Day, to the Lord. Not much unlike those Inhabitants of *Samaria*, who long after are said to have feared the Lord, and yet served their graven Images, 2 Kings 17. 41.

The People however made a *Revelling Feast* of it indeed: For after they had offered Offerings and Peace-offerings, betimes in the Morning; they sat them down to eat and to drink, and when they were full crammed, they rose up to play.

Little thought good *Moses* what was doing in the Camp. He left all things in a very good Posture: The People having newly entred into a Solemn League and Covenant with God, and bound themselves with one Voice, All the Words which the Lord hath said, will we do, and be obedient, Chap. 24. 3. and 7. And now, all on a sudden, the Lord bid *Moses* be gone, Go, get thee down (said God to *Moses*;) For thy People (so he calls them, as disdaining now to own them to be his) which thou broughtest out of the Land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves, and have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them.

Then telling him in Particulars what they had done, he added, I have seen this People (in many Instances) to be stiff-necked, (like the Ox they would worship) Now therefore let me alone (Plead not any longer with me for them) that my Wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: And I will make of thee a great Nation.

This

This perhaps would have pleased some: But poor *Moses* it cut to
Exod. 32. the Heart: Wherefore he earnestly besought the Lord his God on their
 behalfs. And whereas God had called them his People, he returns them
 back upon God again, calling them his People: Lord (said he) *Why*
doth thy Wrath wax hot against (not mine, but) *thy People*; which (not
 I, but) *thou hast brought forth out of the Land of Egypt with great power,*
and with a mighty Hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians blaspheme, and
 say, *For Mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the Mountains?*
Turn therefore, I beseech thee, from thy fierce Wrath, and repent of this
Evil against thy People. Remember Abraham, Isaac and Israel, (wrestling
 and prevailing Israel) *thy Servants, to whom thou didst swear by thine*
own self, saying, I will multiply your Seed, as the Stars of Heaven; and
all this Land, which I have spoken of, will I give unto your Seed, and
they shall inherit it for ever.

We read elsewhere, how effectual the fervent Prayer of a Righte-
 ous Man is, *Jam. 5. 16.* Of which Instances are there given. But if
 no other Instance had been given but this, here's a Signal one. For
 upon this Deprecation of *Moses*, it is said, *The Lord repented of*
the Evil, which he thought to have done unto his People.

Moses, having thus far prevailed with the Lord, hastens down from
 the Mount, having in his Hand the two Tables of the Testimony, which
 were written, or graven, on both sides, *by the Finger of God.* And as he
 went, his Servant *Joshua* (so he was, and so he is called, *Exod. 32. 11.*)
 who had attended him all this while in the Mount, hearing the Noise
 of the People, as they shouted, observed to *Moses*, that there was a
 Noise of War in the Camp. But *Moses* said, *The Noise which I hear,*
is not the Voice of them that shout for Mastery, nor of them that cry for
Quarter: But of them that sing. But as soon as he came near, that he
 saw the Calf, and the People dancing before it, his Anger was so kin-
 dled, that casting the Tables out of his Hands (that he might lay hold on
 the Calf,) he brake them beneath the Mount. Then taking the Calf
 which they had made, he first (to deface it) burnt it in the Fire:
 Then (to destroy it) ground it to Powder; and strowing the Powder upon
 the Water, made the Children of Israel drink of it. Perhaps, that he
 might make them the more sensible of their Folly, in worshipping that
 as a God, which should pass thro' their Bodies into the Draught.

Some it may be, may think *Moses* a little too Zealous, in destroy-
 ing the Matter, or Substance whereof this Calf was made; and that
 the Form being defaced and altered, so great a Mass of Gold might have
 been put to a better Use. But the things which had been devoted or de-
 dicated to, and used in Idolatry, were to be utterly destroyed (*Exod. 34.*
13. Num. 33. 52. Deut. 7. 5.) *The graven Images of their Gods shall ye*
burn with Fire. Thou shalt not desire the Silver or Gold that is on them;
nor take it unto thee, lest thou be Snared therein: For it is an Abomi-
nation to the Lord thy God. Neither shalt thou bring an Abomination into
thy House, lest thou be a cursed thing, like it: But thou shalt utterly
detest it; and thou shalt utterly abhor it: For it is a cursed thing, Deut.
7. 25, 26. see also Deut. 12. 2. 3.

Now began Aaron to contrive how to excuse himself. When there-
 fore *Moses* calling him to Account for what he had done, asked him,
What did this People unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a Sin up-
on them? He desiring *Moses* not to be angry, puts him in mind, that he
 knew the People were bent on Mischief. Then tells him a lame
 Story, That when the People had brought him their Gold, he threw
 it into the Fire, and there came out that Calf. As if the Calf had made
 it self. Whereas the Text is plain and positive, that he made it a molten
 Calf

Calf (that is, melted down the Gold into a Mould of a Calf,) and then fashioned it (more exactly) with a graving Tool. Exod. 32.

Moses stood not long to reason the Case with Aaron. But seeing that he had made the People Naked, (had stripped them of the Defence and Protection, which God's Presence and Favour had been to them) and that too amongst their Enemies (who might thence take Encouragement to fall upon them :) He went and stood in the midst of the Camp; and calling out, said, *Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me.* Whereupon we read, that *All the Sons of Levi gathered themselves unto him, ver. 26.* But since it appears from *ver. 29.* and from *Deut. 33. 9.* that *some of Levi's Sons* were in the Idolatry, Interpreters rather conclude, that *all they that did gather to him were of the Sons of Levi*, tho' not that whole Tribe.

It may well be thought Moses knew, that God would not pass by this so Great Sin, and high Provocation, without some Exemplary Punishment upon the Offenders, either by Pestilence, or some other way, as exposing them to their Enemies, or the like; which he feared might fall heavy upon the Whole People: And that therefore, as some sort of Attonement, and to appease the Anger of the Lord towards Israel, he gave Charge to these Levites, which came to him, to *Arm themselves, and go in and out, from Gate to Gate, through the Camp, and slay every Man his Brother, Companion and Neighbour*: Suppose it to be meant of them, who they knew were actually engaged in that Idolatry.

The Levites, thus Commissioned, fell briskly on: So that there fell of the People that Day about *Three Thousand Men*. Which tho' the Lord was pleased to accept, for the Present; yet would he not discharge the People, but both threatned them, that *in the Day when he should visit, he would visit this their sin upon them*: And he did afterwards, upon fresh Provocations, remember this; and added to their Punishments, because of this Calf: Which the People are said to have made, because they proposed it, and put Aaron upon it; and Aaron is said to have made, because he, at their requiring, wrought it. The Jews have a saying among themselves, that no Punishment befalleth Israel, in which there is not *an Ounce of this Calf*.

After this Execution was done, Moses, returning to the Lord, acknowledged Israel's Sin, and begg'd Forgiveness for it: Which he did with that earnestness and concern of Spirit, as to pray God to blot him out of his Book, if he would not forgive them. But the Lord, who knew how repugnant that was to his Justice, gave him this short Answer, *Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my Book*. A puzzling Place to the Strict Predestinarians.

The Lord then commanded Moses to lead on the People to the Place Exod. 33. he had appointed: But withal, let him know, he was not willing to go along with them, seeing they were such a stiff-necked People, lest they should provoke him to consume them in the way. Yet he told him, he would send his Angel before him, to drive out the Inhabitants of the promised Land, that so he might perform the Oath he had sworn to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

When the People heard these evil Tidings (that God would withdraw his immediate Presence, and turn them over to an Angel's guidance) they mourned; and in token of humbling themselves, they forbore to put on their Ornaments. And Moses, to humble them the more, and make them the more sensible of their Sin, took a Tent, and pitching it without the Camp, afar off from the Camp, called it the *Tabernacle of the Congregation*. Thereby intimating to them, that the Lord was so highly offended with them for their Idolatry, that he removed from them,

and would not now dwell amongst them, as he had done before.
Exod. 33. By this means, every one that sought the Lord, was fain to go to this *Tabernacle*, without the Camp. And when *Moses* himself went out to it, as he entred into it, the *cloudy Pillar* (in which the Lord used to appear) descended, and stood at the Door of the *Tabernacle*.

The People now more heedfully attended *Moses* his Motion; and therefore when he went out to the *Tabernacle*, they rose up, and stood every one at his Tent Door, looking after him, till he was gone in. And when they saw the *cloudy Pillar* (which they knew was a Token of God's Presence) they all worshipped.

Here the Lord talked with *Moses*, and permitted *Moses* to talk with him very familiarly (which to accommodate the Speech to Man's Capacity, is expressed to be, *Face to Face*, as a Man speaketh to his Friend :) Which Favour *Moses* improved to the People's Advantage; labouring, with much intreaty, to reconcile the Lord unto them.

After which, the Lord having (at *Moses* his Request, and to Comfort and Encourage him under his many Exercises) shewn him so much of his Glory, as *Moses* was capable of seeing; he bid him prepare two *New Tables* of Stone, like unto the former (which he had broken) and come up himself alone with them, in the Morning, unto Mount *Sinai*; and I (said he) will write in those *Tables*, the Words that were in the first.

When therefore *Moses* had hewn the *Tables*, and presented himself with them before the Lord, the Lord descending in the Cloud, proclaimed (according to his Promise, chap. 33. 19.) the Name of the Lord. And passing by before him, that he might not too much deject the People, through a Sense of the Severity of his Justice, he proclaimed, *The Lord, the Lord God, Merciful and Gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth; keeping Mercy for Thousands, Forgiving* (or taking away) *Iniquity, Transgression and Sin*. But that none, from so gracious a Promulgation of Mercy, might presume to offend with Impunity, he added, *And that will by no means clear the Guilty: But will visit the Iniquities of the Fathers, upon the Children, to the third and fourth Generation, of them that hate me*, *Exod. 20. and Deut. 5. 9.* Thereby giving them to understand that his Mercy, tho' so transcendently extensive, would not protect or secure wilful and impenitent Sinners.

This heavenly Proclamation made, *Moses* makes haste, not only to bow and worship; but, taking hold of the Grace and Mercy proclaimed, to intercede again for his People (as God was pleased to call them, *ch. 32. 7.*) not only that the Lord would pardon their Iniquity, but would vouchsafe, with his own Presence, to accompany them.

The Lord hereupon was intreated, and prevailed with, to renew his *Covenant* with his People. And having briefly, but with great Majesty, set forth the Marvellous Things he would do for them, in driving out their Enemies before them; he gave them divers Precepts, as the Conditions of the *Covenant*, which they should carefully observe and keep. Amongst these, that which, as being of greatest Moment, obtained the first place, was,

That they should not mix with any other People. Which Command, in as much as it is of so great Weight, and extends to God's People, in all times and places, deserves more particularly to be here exemplified.

Take heed to thyself (saith God to his People) lest thou make a *Covenant* with the Inhabitants of the Land whither thou goest, lest it be for a Snare in the midst of thee. But ye shall destroy their Altars, break their Images, and cut down their Groves. For thou shalt worship no other God:

For

For the Lord, whose Name is JEHOVAH, is a jealous God. Lest thou make a Covenant with the Inhabitants of the Land, and they go a whoring after their Gods, and do sacrifice unto their Gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his Sacrifice, and thou take of their Daughters unto thy Sons, and their Daughters go a whoring after their Gods, and make thy Sons go a whoring after their Gods. Exod. 34.

Now when Moses had been with the Lord in the Mount, Forty Days and Forty Nights, and had received of the Lord the Law of the Ten Commandments, written in the Tables of Stone; and many other Precepts, relating to the Observation of the Sabbath, and other appointed Feasts, and other things belonging to the Jewish Worship, with Directions also for the making of the Tabernacle, &c. (in which time, he did neither eat Bread nor drink Water, verifying in Practice that Saying of our Lord long after, *Man shall not live by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God*, Mat. 4. 4.) He went down from the Mount, and delivered these Laws to the People.

But he knew not that, with God's talking with him, the Skin of his Face had contracted a Spendor or Shining Brightness, casting forth as it were Irradiations, or Beams. Whence not only the vulgar Latin renders Moses his Face *Cornuta*, horned; But Moses was wont of old to be pictured with Horns on his Head. However it was, certain it is, that, at the first sight, Aaron and the Israelites were afraid to come nigh him, and turned away from him; probably, not knowing him, until he spake: For after he had called unto them, it is said, *Aaron, and all the Rulers of the Congregation RETURNED unto him*, and he talked with them. When therefore Moses understood that there was a Brightness upon his Face, he put a Vail upon it (to cover that Glory, which the People could not behold;) and afterwards, all the Children of Israel coming nigh, he gave them in command all that the Lord had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. And from thence forward, during the time that that Lustre remained upon his Face, he put off the Vail, when he went in to speak with the Lord, and put it on again, when he came forth to speak unto the People. From which use of the Vail, the Apostle Paul, shewing the Difference between the Law and the Gospel, elegantly compares That, to Moses his Face obscured with the Vail: This, to his Face Unveiled, and brightly shining.

Amongst divers other Precepts, which (beside the Decalogue) were now given; one was, *That thrice every Year, at three solemn Feasts, all the Males, or Men Children of the Israelites, should appear before the Lord, at the Place which he should chuse to place his Name in.*

This to the Eye of Human Reason might seem hazardous; and they being Fighting-men, might have doubted how, in a Fighting Age, and environed with Fighting Enemies, their Wives and Families, their Goods and Possessions, should be secured from Invasions or Depredations, when all their Borders, and Frontier Places, should be left unguarded, and destitute of Men. But God, anticipated the Objection, by telling them at the same time that he gave them the Command, that he would cast out the Nations before them, and enlarge their Borders: Nor only so, but added, *Neither shall any Man desire thy Land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God, thrice in the Year.* Hence then may be observed, that they who, in the Faith, obey God, and rely on him, may expect and find Protection without Arms, and Defence, without Fighting.

At this time also did Moses acquaint the People with the Lord's Command, That they should bring in their Offerings, being Materials for the making of the Tabernacle, the Particulars whereof are enumerated in Exod. 35.
Verse

Verse 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. of this Chapter, as they were before in Chap. 25.
 Exod. 35. For when *Moses* went into the Mount the *first* time, God gave him the same Direction about the *Tabernacle*: But by reason of the People's *Transgression* in the *Calf*, it was not then delivered to them.

This Offering was *not to be Exalted*; but they might receive it of every one that gave it with a *Willing Heart*. And the Lord so inclined and opened the Hearts of the People, that they brought in their *Offerings*, in great Abundance. So that the Officers, appointed to receive them, making report to *Moses*, that the People had brought in much more than enough for the Service of the Work, Proclamation was made that no more should be brought, Chap. 36. 5, 6. So that their *Liberality* was *restrained*.

The *Materials* thus conferred, were delivered to *Bezaleel*, whom the Lord had called by Name, and had *filled with the Spirit* of God in Wisdom, Understanding and Knowledge in all manner of Workmanship: who with *Aholiab*, and every *Wise-hearted* Man, in whose Heart the Lord had put Wisdom, and whose Heart stirred him up to do it, undertook the Work, and finished it. Nor were the Women excluded; but had their Share, both in the Offerings (chap. 38. 8.) and in the Work of the Lord (not every Woman, as not every Man, but) all the Women that were *Wise-hearted*; all the Women, whose Heart stirred them up in Wisdom, chap. 35. 25, 26.

39. Now when the whole Work was finished, and brought to *Moses*; and he, having viewed it, found that they had done it as the Lord had commanded, *he blessed them*.

And on the *first* Day of the *first* Month (in the *Second* Year after they came out of *Egypt*) the *Tabernacle* was, by God's Command, set up; and all its *Furniture* disposed in the proper Places. Which done, A. M. the Cloud covered it, and the Glory of the Lord filled it: So that (for 2515. a while, even) *Moses* was not able to enter into it. And this Cloud was the Signal to the People of *Israel*, by which they knew both when to march, and when to Rest. For when the Cloud was Taken up from over the *Tabernacle*, the Children of *Israel* *Journied*: but if the Cloud were not taken up, they *Journied* not until it was.

The End of the Book of EXODUS.

T H E
B O O K
O F
LEVITICUS:

So called, because it Treats

Of the Tribe of Levi,

*And the THINGS belonging to their OFFICE.
It contains about One Month's Time.*

A

FTER the *Tabernacle* was set up, the *Altar* fitted, and all things prepared for publick Worship, the Lord proceeded to give Direction to *Moses*, and by him to the People, *How, when, with what, by whom, and in what manner*, his Worship, under that Dispensation, should be performed. Which being set forth at large from Chapter First, to Chapter Eighth; and the *Consecration* of *Aaron*, and his Sons in Chapter Eighth: The Ninth Chapter gives Account of the *First Burnt-offerings* that were offered by *Aaron*; first for himself, and then for the People. To which the Lord was pleased to give a *Miraculous Testimony*, by causing a Fire to come out from before the Lord, which consumed the Burnt-offering upon the Altar, in the sight of the People. Whereupon the People shouted, for Joy that God had so signally owned the Offering; and in Reverence bowed themselves.

The Fire thus kindled ought to have been kept burning, and not to have been let go out: For so had the Lord expressly commanded. *The*

K k

Fire

Levit. 1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.

Fire upon the Altar shall be burning in it, it shall not be put out; and the Priest shall burn Wood on it every Morning: — The Fire shall ever be burning upon the Altar; it shall never go out, Levit 6. 12, 13.

Levit. 10.
A. M.
2515.

But Nadab and Abihu, the two elder Sons of Aaron the Priest, forgetful of their Charge and Duty, whether having let it go out, or not regarding the Holy Fire, took either of them his *Censer* (an Instrument somewhat like a little Fire-shovel, made at first of *Brass*, afterwards of *Gold*) and putting *Common Fire* therein, laid *Incense* thereon: And so offered *Strange Fire* before the Lord, which he commanded them not. Whereupon *there went out Fire from the Lord, and devoured them; so that they died before the Lord.*

From whence may be observed,

1. That in *Religious Performances*, all Fire which is not from the Lord, and of his own kindling, is but *strange fire* to him.

2. That to do or perform any thing, as a part of Religious Worship to God, which he hath not commanded, is to offer *strange Fire* before him.

3. That the Lord will *not accept* such Offerings, as are made with false Fire: But *his Fire* will devour them that offer the *false Fire*, and they will *die before the Lord*, tho' they may not then die outwardly before Men.

This Breach in Aaron's Family, and young Priesthood, must needs be a fore Affliction to Aaron. But he might remember the *Calf*; and perhaps did: For *he held his Peace*, when Moses told him, This is that the Lord spake, saying, *I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me; and before all the People I will be glorified.*

Moses however, having called some of the Kindred, and ordered them to carry the *Dead Bodies* from before the *Sanctuary*, out of the Camp (which they did in their Coats, *without Funeral Pomp*;) gave charge to Aaron, and his other two Sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, that they should not use any of those Tokens, to express their Grief or Mourning, which were then in Fashion, as *Uncovering the Head*, and *Rending the Cloaths*. Which may be a good Instruction and Warning to others, to beware of *Murmuring* or *Extream Sorrowing*, when the Hand of the Lord comes near in Judgment.

Whether those Sons of Aaron had too far *indulged* themselves, in the Use of *Wine*, or other strong Liquors, which might have made them *forgetful* of their Duty, doth not plainly appear. Yet some of the *Jewish Doctors*, Dr. Gell says, plainly *affirm* it. And there is some ground to *suspect* it; because as soon as they were carried out, the Lord charged Aaron and his Sons, on pain of Death, *not to drink Wine or strong Drink*, when they were to go into the Tabernacle of the Congregation; telling them, it shall be a *Statute to them throughout all their Generations*. And he assigns there the Reasons of this so strict *Prohibition*; That *ye may put difference between Holy and Unholy, and between Unclean and Clean: and that ye may teach the Children of Israel all the Statutes, which the Lord hath spoken to them by Moses.*

After this follow many *Temporary Laws*, fitted to that *Dispensation* and *People*; as the *Distinction* of Meats. The Law of *Purifications*. Of Persons *unclean*, by *Leprosie*, or otherwise. To which are added divers other *Laws*, relating to their Offerings. And in Chap. 18. the *Boundaries* of Marriage are set; first in general: *None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover their Nakedness; I am the Lord.* After which follows an *Enumeration* of divers *Degrees*, in particulars prohibited. Which *Specialties* do not restrain the general *Prohibition* to those *particular Degrees* only. But the general *Prohibition* extends

Levit. 11,
12, 13,
14, 15,
16, 17,
18.

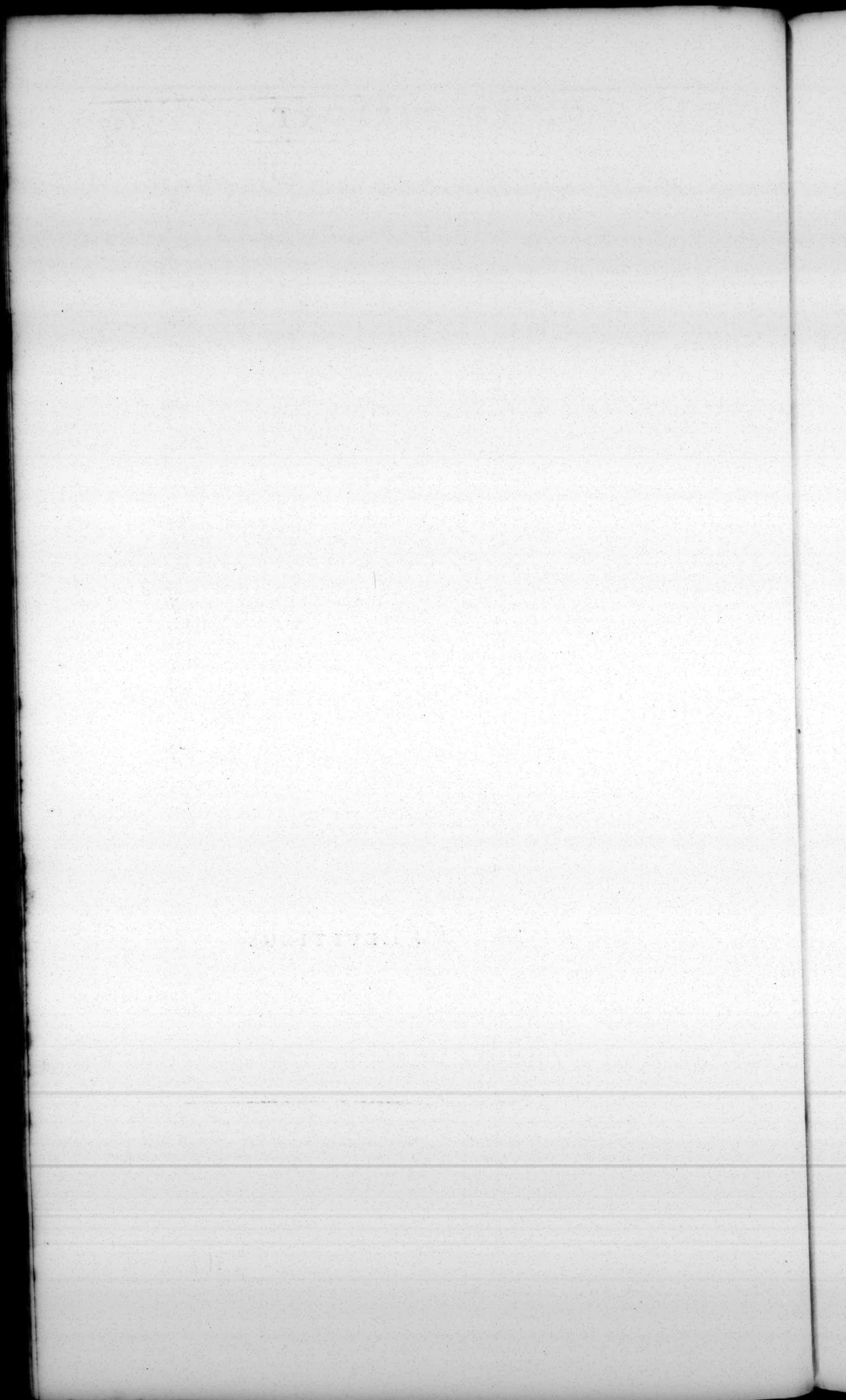
extends by *Analogy*, to all other Degrees, tho' not mentioned, of *like nearness* with any of them that are there mentioned; and *generally to all that is near of kin*. Besides, since in *ver. 3.* the Children of *Israel* are positively forbidden, *to do after the Doings of the Land of Egypt* (from whence they came) or *after the Doings of the Land of Canaan* (whither they were then going:) All such near Degrees of Kindred, as among either the *Egyptians* or *Canaanites*, were permitted to join in Marriage, may reasonably be supposed to be comprehended under this *general Prohibition*.

The rest of this Book is spent, partly in *Repeating Laws* given *Levit. 19.* before; partly in giving *new Laws*, some *Judicial*, most *Ceremonial*; divers *Typifying* the Sincerity, Purity, Holiness and Perfection of Gospel Worship and Worshippers, those especially which more directly concerned that Legal *Priesthood*, taken out of the Tribe of *Levi*. From the Ordering of which, this Book was called *Leviticus*. *20. 21. 22.*

It affords not much of *Historical* matter. Yet in *Chap. 24.* a Relation is given of one, whose Mother's Name was *Shelomith*, an *Israelitish* Woman, of the Tribe of *Dan*: But his Father, it seems, was an *Egyptian*; and supposed to be a *Profelyte* to *Israel*. *24.*

This Young Man, going out of his Tent, among the Children of *Israel*, happened to fall out with a Man of *Israel*, so that they *wrestled*, or strove together; and *Shelomith's* Son *blasphemed the Name of the Lord*, and *curst*. Whereupon being *apprehended*, and brought before *Moses*, he was committed to *Custody*, till the Mind of the Lord should be known concerning him. For tho' the *Third Command* in the *Decalogue* forbids the taking of the Name of the Lord *in vain*: Yet this *blasphemous Cursing* being an Offence of an *higher strain*, against which, *no positive Law* was yet provided, *Moses* had recourse to the Lord for Counsel and Direction therein. And the Lord said, *Bring forth him that hath curst, without the Camp*; and let all that heard him, lay their hands upon his Head: And let all the Congregation stone him; which accordingly was done. And a Law was thereupon made, that he who thence-forward should *blaspheme the Name of the Lord*, whether he were an *Israelite*, or a Stranger, should be *Stoned to Death*. *A. M. 2515.*

The End of the Book called LEVITICUS.



T H E
B O O K
O F
N U M B E R S :

*So called, from Numbring the People : Containing an
History of somewhat more than 38 Years.*

I SRAEL was yet in their *Old Station*, in the *Wilderness of Sinai*, to which they came from *Rephidim*, in the *Third Month* after they came out of *Egypt*. *Exod. 19. 1, 2.* and had tarried there till now, which was the beginning of the *Second Month*, in the *Second Year* of their coming out of *Egypt*. *Numb. 1.*

While they lay encamped here, the Lord appointed *Moses* to take *Aaron*, and with him one Principal Man of every Tribe, whom the Lord pitched on by Name, and make a general Muster of the Men of War. *Take ye (said he) the Sum of all the Congregation of the Children of Israel, after their Families, by the House of their Fathers, with the Number of their Names, every Male by their Poll, from Twenty Years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to War in Israel, thou and Aaron shall number them by their Armies.*

Moses therefore and *Aaron*, with their Assistants in this Service, having taken an exact Account by the Poll, of all the Males from Twenty Years old and upwards, that were able to go forth to War in *Israel*, found the Number to be *Six Hundred and Three Thousand, Five Hundred and Fifty Men*, without and besides the *Levites*. For the whole Tribe of *Levi*, God had expressly exempted out of this Muster, because he had designed them to the peculiar Service of the *Tabernacle*; not only to take the Charge thereof, and of all the *Vessels* belonging thereunto: But to take down the *Tabernacle*, upon every Remove; and to carry both the *Tabernacle*, and the *Vessels* thereof; and set it up again, when they pitched anew.

By this we may give a guess, how much this People were increased in Number, in this Years time, notwithstanding they had been in a travelling Condition, had had a Fight with *Amalek*, (wherein probably

Numb. 1. some of them might fall, while *Amalek* prevailed, *Exod. 17. 11.*) and had lost about Three Thousand Men, upon the Score of their Calf. For they were computed to be but about Six Hundred Thousand Men, including the Tribe of *Levi* with them, when they came out of *Egypt*, *Exod. 12. 37.* And now they were Six Hundred Three Thousand Five Hundred and Fifty Men, besides the Tribe of *Levi*; which being numbered by its self, yielded Two and Twenty Thousand Males, of a Month old and upwards. *Numb. 3. 39.*

From this *Numbring* of the People, this Book, which gives the Account thereof, is called *Numbers*.

This general Muster being made, the Order and Manner of their Encamping follows.

Numb. 2. They were disposed, or *Marshaled*, into Four great Bodies, or *Battalions*; each under one *General Standard*: And were so placed, that they encompassed and inclosed the *Tabernacle*. For that being first pitched, the *Standard* of the Camp of *Judah*, under which were the Tribes of *Judah*, *Issachar* and *Zebulun*, pitched over against it, on the *East* side of it, towards the rising of the Sun.

On the *South* side was the *Standard* of the Camp of *Reuben*; under which were the Tribes of *Reuben*, *Simeon* and *Gad*.

On the *West* side was the *Standard* of the Camp of *Ephraim*; under which were the Tribes of *Ephraim*, *Manasseh* and *Benjamin*.

And on the *North* side was the *Standard* of the Camp of *Dan*; under which were the Tribes of *Dan*, *Asher* and *Naphtali*.

Some tell us, and not without good shew of Reason, That between each Tribe, in every one of those four Quarters or Camps, there were left distant Spaces like *Streets*, for *Buying and Selling*. (See *Godwyn's Moses and Aaron*, l. 6. c. 8.) The distance also, between these four great Camps, and the *Tabernacle*, is supposed to be two *Thousand Cubits*, or a *Mile*, on every side; which may be gathered from *Josh. 3. 4.*

In this vacant Distance, between the Four great Camps and the *Tabernacle*, were pitched Four lesser Camps, consisting of the *Priests and Levites*, nearer to the *Tabernacle*, in and about which their Service lay. *The Levites shall pitch round about the Tabernacle of Testimony*, *Numb. 1. 53.* These were thus disposed.

Numb. 3. On the *East* side did encamp *Moses* and *Aaron*, with *Aaron's Sons*, keeping the Charge of the *Sanctuary*.

On the *South* side were the *Kohathites*, a part of the *Levites*, descended and taking Name from *Kohath*, the *second Son* of *Levi*.

On the *West* side, behind the *Tabernacle*, stood the *Gershonites*, another part of the *Levites* from *Gershon*, *Levi's eldest Son*.

And on the *North* side were planted the *Merarites*, the remaining part of the *Levites*, sprung from *Merari*, *Levi's youngest Son*.

This was the Order in which they stood encamped. The manner of their *Dislodging* and *Marching*, follows not yet in the *Text*; some other things, relating to the *Levites Services*, and other Matters, being interposed. But because there is some Connection of Matter, in the *Israelites Encamping and Discamping*, I am willing to connect the Relations of them here.

Numb. 10. When they were to Remove and March (which was when the *Cloud* was taken off the *Tabernacle*), the *Trumpet* was sounded, and upon the First *Alarm*, the *Standard* of the Camp of *Judah* being raised, the Three Tribes which were under that *Standard*, set forward.

Then the *Tabernacle* being taken down, the *Gershonites* and the *Merarites* set forward, bearing the *Tabernacle* (that is, the *Boards* and *Staves* of the *Tabernacle*) in *Waggons*, which the *Princes* of the Tribes, at the Erecting

Erecting of the Tabernacle, had offered to the Lord, and he had appointed to that Service, *Numb. 7. 2. to 9.*

These being on their March, a *Second Alarm* was given by sound of *Trumpet*. Whereupon the *Standard* of *Reuben's* Camp set forward, with the *Three Tribes* that belonged to it. *Numb. 10.*

And after them, followed the *Kobathites*, bearing the *Sanctuary*; which being *more Holy*, and *less Cumberfom* to carry, than the *Boards* and *Staves* of the *Tabernacle*, was not to be put in *Waggons*: But born on their *Shoulders*.

Next followed the *Standard* of *Ephraim's* Camp, with the *Tribes* under it. And last of all, the other *Three Tribes*, under the *Standard* of *Dan*, brought up the *Rear*.

Having thus taken a brief *Survey* of the *Israelites*, both in their *Camps* and *Marches*: Let us now look back to those *Chapters* we *stept* over; and observe what is most memorable in them.

There we have, The Lord's taking the *Levites* to himself, in *Exchange* *Chap. 3, 4.* for the *First-born*; with the Reason of his so doing: And his giving the *Levites* to the *Priests*, for the *Service* of the *Tabernacle*; distributing them into three *Classes* or *Orders*, and appointing them their several *Services*, set forth at large, in *Chap. 3d* and *4th*.

After which follows that clear and excellent *Type* of *Gospel-Purity*, and *Christian-Church-Discipline*; expressed in God's Commanding the *Children of Israel*, to put out of the *Camp* every *Leper*, and every one that had a *running Issue*, and whosoever was *Defiled* by the *Dead*, both *Male* and *Female*: that they might not *defile* their *Camps*, in the midst of which the Lord dwelled. 5.

Then follow divers *Laws*, relating to *Restitution* in Cases of *Trespafs*. And to the *Trial of Jealousie* between Men and their Wives. 6.

To the *Vow of Nazarites*. To which is subjoyned the Form of that divine *Blessing*, which the Lord himself did dictate, for the *Priests* to pronounce upon the *People*, in *Chap. 6.*

The *Offerings* of the *Princes*, at the *Dedication* of both the *Tabernacle* and the *Altar*, &c. are set down at length in the *Seventh Chapter*. The *Consecration*, and *Purification* of the *Levites*, in *Chap. Eighth*. A *Reinforcement* of the *Passover*; and the *Guidance* of the *Israelites* by the *Cloud*, in *Chap. Ninth*. Which brings us to the *Order* of both their *Encamping* and *Marching*, in *Chap. 10.* Of which we have taken a view before. 7.
8.
9.
10.

To proceed now therefore from the *Order* to the *Action*. The *People* having lain a pretty while before the *Mount* of the Lord, did now depart from thence; and the *Ark* of the *Covenant* of the Lord went before them, to search out a resting Place for them. At the setting forward of the *Ark* *Moses* said, *Rise up, Lord, and let thine Enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee*. And when the *Ark* rested again, he added, *Return, O Lord, unto the many Thousands of Israel*. Three Days Journey they now marched, till they came to a Place, which afterwards was called *Kibroth-Hattaavah*, or the *Graves of Lust*, from a doleful Occasion; which was this.

The *People* were got again into a *murmuring* humour, and began to grumble and complain. Which the Lord hearing, and being displeased at, his Anger was kindled, and that *kindled a Fire among them*, which consumed such of them as were in the outermost parts of the *Camp*, the *People* hereupon cried to *Moses*; and *Moses* prayed to the Lord on their behalfs: Whereupon the *Fire* was quenched, and the Name of that Place called *Taberah*, which signifies a *Burning*; because the *Fire* of the Lord burned among them. *Numb. 11.
A. M.
2515.*

This

This seems to have befallen them in their Journey, between Station Numb. 11. and Station, as they were travelling from Sinai to Kibroth-Hattaavah. And this, one would think, might have been a fair warning to them, and have taught them to be quiet.

But they were a dissatisfied People, and loved their Bellies well: Which often cost them dear; and so now. For being come to new Quarters, they expected better Fare: And so gave scope to their Appetites, to lust after that which was not fit for them. This Lust began, it seems, in the mixt Multitude that was amongst them (of which we read, Exod. 12. 38. that a mixt Multitude went up out of Egypt with them:) And the Israelites, being in a discontented Temper, too readily fell in with them; saying, *Who shall give us Flesh to eat?*

Then, to heighten each other's Discontent, they call to mind the brave Fare (as they now thought it) which they had had in Egypt. But say not a word of their Burdens, their Labour and Toil in Egypt, in getting Stubble, and making and Burning Brick; nor the Blows and Stripes they had received, for not doing their Tasks. We remember (said they one to another) *the Fish we did eat in Egypt freely; the Cucumbers and the Melons, the Leeks, the Onions and the Garlick.* Thus they gloried in their Egyptian Fare, both Meat and Sauce; commending their Condition in Egypt, and wishing they had not come from thence.

But to shew their dislike and contempt of their present Food, which God provided for them, every Morning fresh and fresh, they said, *But now our Life is dried away: For we have nothing to eat, but this Manna.* This they uttered weeping; but with such a Tone, that it is said, *Moses heard the People Weep, throughout their Families, every Man at the Door of his Tent: At which Moses was displeased; but the Lord's Anger was kindled greatly.*

Moses hereupon taking occasion to pour forth his Grief before the Lord, and to complain of the weight of the Burden, which the Care of so numerous and discontented a People, brought upon him: The Lord was graciously pleased to provide a Remedy; directing him to choose out Seventy Men of the Elders of Israel, and bring them with him to the Tabernacle of the Congregation. And there, said the Lord, *I will come down and talk with thee; and I will take of the Spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them: And they shall bear the Burden of the People with thee; that thou bear it not thy self alone.*

Hence may be observed,

1. That there is a Spirit of Government.
2. That this Spirit of Government is of God, comes from him, is given by him.
3. That he Transfers this Spirit of Government from one to another, as he pleases.
4. That none are fit to govern God's People, tho' they be Elders, till they have received this Spirit of Government from God.
5. That they who have received this Spirit of Government, are thereby Distinguished from others, that have it not, and from what they themselves were, before they had it.

For as soon as Moses had brought the Seventy Elders before the Lord, and the Lord had taken of the Spirit that was upon him, and given it unto them; while the Spirit rested upon them, they Prophesied. Nay, Two of those Seventy, tho' they came not out with the rest to the Tabernacle, but remained behind in the Camp: Yet, not doing it in a gain-saying or opposite mind, they were taken in among the rest, and received of the Spirit, as the others did; and Prophesied in the Camp, as the others Prophesied at the Tabernacle.

The

The unufualnefs of this caused a young Man to run from the Camp to the Tabernacle, to acquaint *Moses*, that *Eldad* and *Medad*, (fo were they Named) were *Prophefying in the Camp*. Which Message *Jofhua*, *Moses* his Servant another young Man, who was not yet fo thoroughly acquainted with the way of the Lord's working, as afterwards he came to be) over-hearing, and thinking it fome *Derogation* from his Mafter, that they fhould *Prophefy*, and not follow him, advised his Mafter to forbid them: But was prefently ftopt, with this gentle Reproof, *Dof thou envy for my fake? Would to God that all the Lord's People were Prophets, fo that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them.*

*Numb. 11.
A. M.
2215.*

As to the People's Demand of *Flefh* (which in his Complaint *Moses* had fpread before the Lord,) the Lord ordered *Moses* to bid them prepare themfelves againft to morrow: For they fhould have *Flefh enough*. The Lord will give you *Flefh*, faid he, and ye fhall eat, not one Day only, nor two Days, nor Five, nor Ten, nor Twenty; but for a whole Month together, until it come out at your *Nostrils*, and it be loathfom unto you: becaufe ye have defpifed the Lord, who is among you, (in defpifing and loathing his Provifion;) and have wept before him, faying, *Why came we forth out of Egypt?*

It was hard to *Moses* to apprehend, how fuch a numerous Hofte fhould be fed with *Flefh* fo long together, in fuch a place as they were in. The People (faid he to God) *amongft whom I am, are Six Hundred Thoufand Foot-men*, (Nay, they were Six Hundred, Three Thoufand Five Hundred and Fifty, befides the Tribe of *Levi*, and befides Women and Children;) and thou haft faid, *I will give them Flefh, that they may eat a whole Month. Shall the Flocks and the Herds be flain for them, to fuffice them? Or, fhall all the Fish in the Sea be gathered together for them, to fuffice them?*

The Lord confidered the greatnefs of *Moses* his Exercife, and therefore bore with him; and only giving him this gentle Rebuke, *Is the Lord's Hand waxed fhort?* added, *Thou fhalt fee now whether my Word fhall come to pafs unto thee or not.*

Accordingly, when *Moses* with the Elders was gone back to the Camp, and had acquainted the People with it, *There went forth a Wind* (not a common Wind, but,) *a Wind from the Lord, which brought Quails from the Sea, and let them fall about a Days Journey off*, (underftand it of a Sabbath-day's Journey, which fome fuppofe to be a Mile, fome Two Miles,) round about the Camp: Where they lay upon the ground *Two Cubits* (which, fuppofing it to be fpoken of the Common, which is the fhorteft Cubit, is a yard) high.

Forthwith the People fell eagerly to gathering up the *Quails*; and all that Day, all that Night, and all the next Day, they fpent about it: Every one gathering great, and almoft incredible Quantities. Nor may we fuppofe they were lefs greedy in eating them. But while the *Flefh* was yet between their Teeth, e're it was chewed, the Wrath of the Lord was kindled againft the People, and he fmote them with a very great Plague. Thus, when People provoke the Lord, by not being fatisfied with what he gives them, but craving that which they fhould not have; they fometimes have their Requests granted, in Judgment to them: And what they fo obtain, oft-times, proves a Plague to them. Here they buried thofe of the People, who, for lufing after *Flefh*, were fmitten with the Plague: And from thence the Place was called *Kibroth-Hattaavah*; which fignifies, *The Graves of Luft*.

This was no good Place to ftay in: From hence therefore the People Journied to *Hazereth*, which fignifies, *Palaces*. But here another unhappy Accident befel them; occafioned thus.

M m

Moses

Numb. 12. Moses had married *Jethro's* Daughter, who was a *Midianite's* : and some squabble, it is supposed, had happened, or evil *Emulation* risen, between *Zipporah*, *Moses* his Wife, and *Miriam* his Sister. However it was, *Miriam* taking occasion partly from his having married this Wife (who, tho' she came of *Abraham* by *Keturah*, yet was not by Birth an *Israelite*) and partly from his *Eminent Station* in the Camp, and among the People, vented her Displeasure upon her Brother *Moses*. And she having begun, her Brother *Aaron* fell in with her, in speaking against their Brother *Moses*.

And *Miriam* and *Aaron*, the Text says, *spake against Moses, because of the Ethiopian Woman that he had married*. So, in contempt, they called her, as if she had indeed been an *Ethiopian*, because the *Midianites* bordered upon the *Ethiopians*. This, as being more specious, they made the pretence of their Quarrel; but the ground or bottom of it seems to have been an *Emulation* of his Gifts and Authority. For they added, *What! Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us?* as if they had said, Wherein is *Moses* better than we, that he should be so set up? Am not I, *Miriam*, elder than he, and a *Prophetess*? (so she is called, *Exod. 15. 20.*) And am not I, *Aaron* the High-Priest, and Elder than he also? Why must we be overlooked, and he be all in all?

Moses was not ignorant of their Discontent and *Detraction*; and tho' no Man was more sensible than he, or readier to Resent an Indignity Offered to the Lord: Yet looking upon this as a *Personal Pique* at himself, he would not take notice of it. But the Lord, who sees and hears all things, is said (after the manner of Men) to have heard this their Reproach, and Contempt of his Servant *Moses*: And he would not put it up. Wherefore on a sudden, calling forth *Moses*, *Aaron*, and *Miriam* before him, at the Door of the Tabernacle, he there, before *Moses*, gave them a sharp Rebuke asking them, *Wherefore they were not afraid to speak against his Servant Moses?* And to presume to equal themselves to him, who was more than an Ordinary Prophet? Then departing from them in high Displeasure, he smote *Miriam*, (who in this Case was the Prime Offender) with Leprosy; so that *Aaron* looking on her, saw she was white as Snow. He therefore presently applied himself to *Moses*, whom they had so lately despised; and Confessing their Sin, begg'd his Pardon, and interceded for his Sister.

Good *Moses* thereupon cryed unto the Lord, beseeching him to heal her. But the Lord would make her an Example, that others might be wary how they moved Sedition in the Camp. Therefore he gave order that (tho' she was *Miriam*,) she should be shut out from the Camp, for the Space of Seven Days (as every common Leper, and all unclean Persons were,) and then to be received in again. This made the People tarry longer in this Place, than otherwise they would have done: For they Journeyed not till *Miriam* was brought in again; and then they removed from *Hazereth*, and took up their next Station at *Rithmah*, in the Wilderness of *Paran*.

From thence by many Removes, and a matter of Seventeen several Stations (which see in *Numb. 33.* from ver. 19. to 36.) they came at length to *Kadesh-barnea*. And here *Moses* let them know, that they were now come unto the Mountain of the *Amorites*, which the Lord their God had given them; and that the Lord their God had set the Land before them (*i. e.* had brought them just to the Border of it:) Wherefore he bad them go up, and possess it; as the Lord God of their Fathers had said they should; and not fear, nor be discouraged. *Deut. 1. 20, 21.* But truly, they began to draw back, and proposed the sending of certain

certain Men before hand to search out the Land, and bring them word by what way they must go up, and what Cities they should go into. *Numb. 13.*

The Lord therefore, to try them to the full, condescended thereunto; and bad Moses send Men, one chosen out of every Tribe, to search the Land of Canaan. Moses thereupon chose out Twelve Men, that were Heads of the Children of Israel (who are there named) and sent them forth to spie the Land.

Their Instruction was, to go up Southward into the Land of Canaan, and see and observe *what a kind of Countrey it was; what sort of People dwelt in it; whether they were Lusty, Large, Strong-bodied Men; or Small, Weak, Feeble Folks; and whether the Inhabitants were few or many; whether they generally dwelt in Tents (and open Villages,) or in Strong-holds; and of what strength their Cities were. Then as to the Soil it self, whether the Land was Fat or Lean, Fruitful or Barren; and whether the Countrey was Woody, or an open Champaign Countrey.* *A. M. 2515.*

Thus instructed and exhorted to be Couragious, and bring with them some of the Fruit of the Land, they set forward, probably Two and Two together, both that they might pass less observed, and might have the better opportunity of viewing the Land the more fully. And having coasted the Countrey from South to North, in their return coming to a rich Valley, they there cut down a Branch of a Vine, having one Cluster of Grapes upon it; but that of so great Bigness and Weight, that they were fain to carry it upon a Staff between Two. The Name of that Place was afterwards called the Valley of Eschcol (which signifies *A Cluster of Grapes*;) because of the Cluster they there cut off.

Having spent Forty Days in searching the Land, they returned, with their Load of Grapes, and some Pomegranates and Figs, and came to the Camp of Israel at Kadesh, where they left it. And having shewed the Fruits of the Land to Moses, Aaron, and the whole Congregation, they related the Observations they had made in their Journey.

But in giving the Account thereof, they who undertook that Province, tho' they were forced to acknowledge the Goodness and Richness of the Land, which the Fruits they had brought were a Proof of; yet they followed that Acknowledgment with a discouraging, *Nevertheless:*

Nevertheless, said they, *the People be strong that dwell in the Land; and the Cities are Walled and very Great. Neither is that all, of the worst: But moreover, we saw the Children of Anak there. Then reckoning up the Strength of their Enemies; The Amalekites, said they, dwell in the South part of the Land: The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites in the Mountains; and the Canaanites by the Sea, and by the Coast of Jordan.*

This was *Frightful News* to a *Faint-hearted* People, prepared already by their own Discontents, to receive *Ill Impressions* from others. And doubtless they quickly shewed their *unruliness*: For we read in the very next Words, that Caleb, (with whom Joshua joyned) did what he could to still the People before Moses, saying, *Let us go up by all means, and possess the Countrey: For we are well able to overcome it.*

But the other Ten Spies told the People, *We are not able to go up against that People: For they are stronger than we. And whereas before they had spoken well of the Land it self, confessing that it was assuredly a Land flowing with Milk and Honey: Yet now, to beget in the People an ill Opinion of it, they say in contradiction to themselves; it is a Land that eateth up the Inhabitants thereof. And to terrify the People*

ple the more, they tell them of the *Giants* they saw there, the *Sons of Anak*, in comparison of whom, they (*Hyperbolically*) say, They were in their fight, and in their own also, but as *Grasshoppers*, or *Locusts*. Nay, they stretched so far as to tell them, that *all the People they saw in the Land were Men of great stature*.

Numb. 14. This put the whole Camp into great Disorder. Some fell a Roaring; others a weeping: All a murmuring against *Moses* and *Aaron*. Would God we had died in the Land of *Egypt*: or would God we had died in the *Wilderness*, said the whole Congregation. Nor stopt their Rage at *Moses* and *Aaron*, but rose higher: They struck at God himself, obliquely charging him with Breach of Promise. Wherefore, said they, hath the Lord brought us into this Land, to fall by the Sword, that our Wives; and our Children should be a Prey? As if they had said: He promised to give us this Land, and to settle us quietly in it: And now instead of that, after so long Travel, and so many Hardships, as we have undergone to come to it, he hath brought us hither to be cut in pieces by these monstrous Giants. To avoid this danger, were it not better (said some to the rest) for us to return into *Egypt*? To that Proposition these *Mutineers* could readily listen: And they said one to another, Let us make a Captain, and let us return into *Egypt*.

How great now must the Exercise needs be of *Joshua* and *Caleb*! They were of them that searched the Land: But they were but Two to Ten. Yet they stood boldly up, in the Zeal of the Lord; and having rent their Cloaths, through excessive Sorrow, they spake unto all the Company, saying, The Land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good Land, flowing indeed with Milk and Honey (that is, abounding with all good and necessary Provisions) and if the Lord delight in us, he will bring us into this Land, and give it us: Only hinder not your selves of it, by rebelling against the Lord; neither fear the People of the Land: For they are but as Bread to us (that is, we shall as surely overcome them, as we eat our Food.) For their Defence is departed from them: But the Lord, who is our Defence, is with us; therefore fear them not.

So far were the People from being reclaimed by this *Pathetick* Speech, that all the Congregation bad stoned them with Stones that spake it: Which probably they had done, had not the Glory of the Lord visibly appeared at that instant, in the *Tabernacle* of the Congregation, before all the Children of *Israel*.

Mean while good *Moses* with *Aaron* lay prostrate on their Faces, in the sight of the People, supplicating the Lord for Mercy to them. Whereupon the Lord expostulating with *Moses*, said, How long shall this People Provoke me? And how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the Signs which I have shewed amongst them? (Let me alone, *Exod.* 32. 10. and) I will smite them with the Pestilence, and dis-inherit them: And will make of thee a greater Nation, and mightier than they.

Who, but a *Moses*, would have again refused such an offer? But he, post-poning his own private Advantage and Honour, to the Honour of God, and the Good of that People, applied himself with all Earnestness to intercede with the Lord for them. Nor gave he over, till what with Reasoning, what with humbly Intreating Pardon for them, he prevailed with the Lord to say, I have pardoned (as to the utter Destroying and Dis-inheriting them, as I threatned) according to thy word. But yet notwithstanding, inasmuch as those Men, who have seen my Glory, and my Miracles, which I wrought in *Egypt*, and in the *Wilderness*, have tempted me now so often, and have not hearkned to my voice, assuredly they shall not see the Land, which I promised unto their Fathers, neither

neither shall any of them that provoked me, see it. Wherefore say unto the People, As I live, saith the Lord, As ye have spoken in mine Ears, so *Numb. 14.* will I do unto you. Your Carcasses shall fall in this Wilderness, and of all that were Numbred of you from Twenty years old and upwards, because ye have murmured against me, None shall come into the Land, save Caleb and Joshua. Yet will I make good my Promise, which I made to your Fathers. For your Little Ones, which ye said should be a Prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the Land which ye have despised. But as for you, who are gathered together against me, your Carcasses shall fall in this Wilderness: There ye shall be consumed, and there ye shall die. And your Children (tho' they shall possess the good Land, when ye are dead) shall wander in the Wilderness Forty Years; and shall bear your Whoredoms (the Punishment due for your Whoredoms) until your Carcasses be wasted in the Wilderness. After the Number of the days in which ye searched the Land, even Forty days (each Day for a Year) shall ye bear your Iniquities, even Forty years: And ye shall know my Breach of Promise (that is, what it is to charge me, as ye have implicitly done, with Breach of Promise to you: Or, what it is to break Promise or Covenant with me, as ye have done).

But tho' God, at the instant Intreaty of Moses, did reverse his Sentence of present Death upon the whole Congregation of Murmurers: Yet the Ten false Spies, the immediate Authors of this Rebellion, who had brought up an Evil Report upon the good Land, were punished with Death at that time; for they died by the Plague before the Lord. But Caleb and Joshua (who were Men of a right Spirit, and fulfilled the Will of the Lord) they were preserved alive, were commended of God, and had his Promise, that they should enter into, and possess the good Land.

At this time, it is supposed, and upon this occasion, Moses wrote that *Precatory Psalm*, which in the Book of *Psalms*, is the Ninetieth Psalm in Number. Which therefore the Reader may do well to turn to, and read in this Place.

When Moses had told the Children of Israel what the Lord had determined concerning them, it is said, *They mourned greatly.* But it doth not appear they were grown more subject, or were better disposed to obey the Lord. For whereas the Lord, not only in pursuance of his Purpose concerning them (to wear them out in the Wilderness) but to prevent their being beaten by the *Amalekites* and *Canaanites*, (who prepared to fight them, and he was not willing their Enemies should Glory in a Victory over them, nor yet so far to own and stand by them, in their present Temper, as to give them Victory over their Enemies, and therefore) had given Order that the next day they should turn, and get them into the Wilderness again, by the way of the Red-sea: they got up betimes in the Morning, and marching up unto the Top of the Mountain, cried, *Lo, we be here ready, and we will go up unto the Place which the Lord hath Promised: For we have sinned* (that is, in not going up when we were bid.) So now, being sensible they had offended before in Drawing back, when they should have Gone on, they would now make amends by Rushing on; when they should have Gone back. But this being undertaken in their own rebellious Wills, as well as the other, was but adding Sin to Sin. God will be served in his own time and way.

Moses would fain have restrained them. He asked them, *Why they would now again transgress the Command of the Lord?* He told them, *Their Enterprize should not prosper;* Bid them, *not go up*, that they might not be smitten before their Enemies; Told them, *The Lord was not*

among them ; That the Amalekites and Canaanites were got thither before them ; and that, if they went on, they should fall by the Sword ; And in fine told them, Because they were turned from the Lord, the Lord would not be with them.

All this notwithstanding, they being *heady* and presumptuous, would go up : And tho' the Ark of the Lord (which was to go before the Host in Battel) went not, and Moses their Captain did not stir out of the Camp : Yet up they went unto the Hill-top. But they were met with : For the Amalekites, having possessed themselves of the Place, came powdering down upon them ; and the Canaanites, which dwelt in the Hill, falling in with them, smote them, and discomfited them. And this they got by their unruliness.

Moses tells us, in Deut. 1. 2. that *there were eleven Days Journey from Horeb to Kadesh-barnea* : And yet the People of Israel, thro' their waywardness and disobedience, spent the best part of two Years in going that eleven Days Journey. But more strange it is, that, being now turned back again from Kadesh-barnea, when they were near the Confines of the promised Land, they should be Eight and Thirty Years more, wandering about in that Wilderness, before they could come to the Borders of the promised Land again. Yet that so long they were, Moses expressly says ; *The space in which we came from Kadesh-barnea, until we were come over the Brook Zered, was Thirty and Eight Years*, Deut. 2. 14.

In this time many Accidents befel them, and many remarkable Occurrences are recorded of them. Of which the First is, Of a Man, who by a Law made *ex post-facto* (as in the Case of the Blasphemer, mentioned before, Levit. 24th.) was stoned to Death for breaking the Sabbath, by gathering Sticks on that Day.

Next follows that horrible Rebellion and Schism, begun by Korah, Great Grandson to Levi ; who (as that which is called the Bishops Bible, Printed Anno 1600. renders it) went apart (that is divided or separated himself, from Moses and Aaron) and having seduced Dathan and Abiram (Sons of Eliab, of Reuben's Family) and drawn in some others, to the Number of Two Hundred and Fifty ; but those Princes of the Assembly, Men of Renown, famous in the Congregation, (Men of Name and Interest among the People :) They rose up against Moses and Aaron, charging them, that they took too much upon them ; and pretending that all the Congregation was Holy, every one of them, and that the Lord was among them ; they upbraidingly asked Moses and Aaron, *Wherefore then lift ye up your selves above the Congregation of the Lord ?*

When Moses saw and heard this, apprehensive of the Danger and Hurt, a Conspiracy, so headed, might produce, he fell on his Face : (A Phrase used to express Divine Adoration, and Application to God for help) And good Reason there is to believe, that in that Humble Posture the Lord appeared to him ; and both Comforted and Counsell'd him. For presently after, we read he spake unto Korah, and his Company, setting them know, with great Assurance, that on the Morrow the Lord would decide the Controversie, and would make appear who were his, and who was Holy ; and would cause him whom he had chosen, to come near unto him.

Then mildly Expostulating the Matter with them, to let them see they took too much upon them, he said to Korah, and the other Levites that joyned with him ; Hear, I pray you, ye Sons of Levi, Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the Congregation of Israel, to bring you near unto himself, to do the Service of the Tabernacle of the Lord ; and to stand before the Congregation,

gation, to minister unto them? And hath brought thee, Korah, near; and all thy Brethren, the Sons of Levi, with thee? And seek ye the Priest-hood also? For that's the Cause, for which thou, and all thy Company, are gathered together against the Lord. For what ever ye may pretend against Aaron, it is against the Lord, and against his Appointment, that ye thus murmur and conspire: For alas! What is Aaron that ye should murmur against him?

Dathan and Abiram, it seems, stood off at a Distance: For Moses sent, to call them to come up to him. But they, grown Heady and Resolute, answered Surlily, *We will not come up.* And to retort his own Expression upon himself, *Is it a small thing (said they) that thou hast brought us up out of the Land that floweth with Milk and Honey (so in contempt of Canaan, they cry up Egypt) to kill us in the Wilderness, except thou make thy self altogether a Prince over us? Moreover, (added they, unbraid-ingly,) thou hast not brought us (for all thy great Boasts, and fair Promises) into a Land that floweth with Milk and Honey, or given us Inheritance of Fields and Vineyards. (But when we were come almost to it, and would have gone on to enter into it, and possess it, thou hast turn'd us back into this barren Wilderness again, to repeat the Fatigues, Hardships and Miseries we have passed thro' already:) And wilt thou put out the Eyes of these Men? (Wilt thou think to blind the People with fair Words only, and lead them on Hood-winked?) We will not come up.*

These Reproachful and Undeserved Taunts, made Moses very wroth: Yet did he not return Railing for Railing. But addressing himself to the Lord, *Respect not thou their Offering, (said he:) For, (tho' they reflect thus foully upon me) I have not taken so much as an Ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them.*

Then summoning Korah and all his Company, the Two Hundred and Fifty Princes, to meet him and Aaron before the Lord on the Morrow, he bid them *take every Man his Censer, and put Incense in them, and Aaron should bring his Censer also, and appear all before the Lord.* They had the Confidence so to do: And bringing every Man of them his Censer, with Fire in it, and Incense laid thereon, they boldly set themselves in the Door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation with Moses and Aaron: And Korah (so apt is the Multitude to be carried the wrong way) had gathered all the Congregation (to side with him) against them.

But forthwith the Glory of the Lord appeared unto all the Congregation: And the Lord soon took up the Matter; saying unto Moses and Aaron, *Separate your selves from among this Congregation, that I may consume them in a Moment.* But they, good Men, falling prostrate before the Lord, said, *O God, thou God of the Spirits of all Flesh; shall one Man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the Congregation? Speak then, (said the Lord) unto the Congregation, and bid them, Get them up from about the Tabernacle of Korah, Dathan and Abiram.*

Moses thereupon rising up, and the Elders of Israel (upon whom the Lord had put of his Spirit, Chap. 11. 25.) following him, he went unto Dathan and Abiram; and directing his Speech to the Congregation, said, *Depart, I pray you, from the Tents of these wicked Men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed with them in their Sins.*

The People thus warned, drew off from the Tents of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, on every side. But Dathan and Abiram, came boldly out, and stood braving it, in the Door of their Tents, with their Wives, their Families, and their little Children.

Then

Then Moses (continuing his Speech to the People) said, *Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these Works; and that I have not done them of my own Head: If these Men die, as other Men commonly do; or if they be visited after the Visitation of other Men: Then take it for granted that the Lord hath not sent me. But if the Lord work after an unusual and strange manner; and the Earth opening her Mouth, swallow them up, so that they go down quick (or alive) into the Pit, then, shall ye understand, that these Men have provoked the Lord.*

No sooner were the Words out of his Mouth, but the Ground that was under them clave asunder; and the Earth opening her Mouth, swallowed them up, and their Houses (or Families) and all the Men (the whole Faction) that belong'd to Korah (except his Sons, *Chap. 26. 11.*) and all their Goods: They, and all that belong'd to them, went down alive into the Pit; and the Earth closing upon them, they perished from among the Congregation.

The rest of the People, that stood round about them looking on, scared with the dismal sight, and affrighted with the Outcries and Shrieks, of those, that sunk into the gaping Earth, fled away for fear the Earth should have swallowed them up also.

Mean while, there came out a Fire from the Lord, and consumed the Two Hundred and Fifty Men, that joyning with Korah in this Rebellion, had offered Incense contrary to the Law.

The Censers, on which they had offered, were ordered to be taken out of the Burning and preserved: But not in Censers. For as on the one Hand, in as much as they had been offered before the Lord, and thereby had obtained (at least, in the Opinion of the People) a sort of Consecration, the Lord (to keep up among that People the Reputation, and Estimation of things devoted) would not have them put to base Uses; So, on the other Hand, to put a difference between his own Institutions, and Men's Contrivances (especially the wicked Contrivances of wicked Men) he would not suffer them to be employed to the same Use, nor be continued in the same Form which those Men had put them to, and used them in. But he appointed, that all those Brasen Censers should be wrought out into Broad Plates, (or rather, perhaps, into one broad Plate) and so be laid for a Covering over the Altar; giving expressly this Reason for it, That it might be for a Sign, and a Memorial unto the Children of Israel, that no Stranger, who was not of the Seed of Aaron, should adventure to come near to offer Incense before the Lord; lest he speed as Korah, and his Company had sped.

This Exemplary Punishment, so evidently inflicted by a Divine Hand, on these Offenders, had been enough, one would have thought, to have kept the rest within the Bounds of due Obedience: But they, on the contrary, from hence took occasion to mutiny afresh.

For on the very Morrow, all the Congregation of the Children of Israel not only murmured against Moses and Aaron; but bandying together against them, charged them, that they had killed the People of the Lord. And to what degree of Madness and Violence they might have proceeded, is doubtful, had they not, looking toward the Tabernacle of the Congregation, seen the Cloud covering it, and the Glory of the Lord appearing there; a sure Token that the Lord had something to say to them.

Moses thereupon hasting, with Aaron, to the Tabernacle of the Congregation, to wait the Pleasure of the Lord, the Lord said, *Get ye up from among this Congregation, that I may consume them as in a Moment.* They thereupon fell down (as they use to do) to supplicate the Lord, for the People; but it would not now do: for the Lord, provoked by their

their so frequent Rebellions, had already sent a Plague among them. Wherefore Moses bid Aaron take a Censer, and put Fire therein from *Numb. 16.* off the Altar, and put Incense thereon, and go quickly unto the Congregation, and make an Atonement for them: For, said he, there is Wrath gone out from the Lord; and the Plague is begun.

Aaron therefore (as Moses had directed him) ran into the midst of the Congregation, with his Censer and Holy Fire; and finding the Plague was indeed begun among the People, he put on Incense, and made an Atonement for them, and setting himself between the Living and the Dead, the Lord was pleased to stop the Plague: But not until there had fallen by it Fourteen Thousand and Seven Hundred Persons, besides them that died about the matter of Korah.

And now, since the Office of the Priesthood had proved such a Bait *Numb. 17.* to Ambitious and Aspiring Minds, and the striving for it had cost many so dear; the Lord, to end all Contests about it, and quash all false Pretensions to it, resolved by a Convincing Miracle, to confirm and establish it in the Family, wherein he had placed it.

In order whereunto, he directed Moses to take of the Prince, or Head of every Tribe, a Rod, (or Staff;) and to write upon each Rod the Name of the Prince, or Head of that Tribe to which that Rod belonged: And on the Rod of Levi's Tribe to write Aaron's Name; and then to lay up all these Twelve Rods in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, before the Ark of the Testimony, where the Lord should meet with them. And to let them know, that the Lord himself would determine the Controversy, and put an end to all their Murmurings, by causing the Rod of that Man to Blossom, whom he should choose.

Moses, according to this Direction, having received from the Prince of each Tribe a Rod, with his Name written upon it, laid up all the Rods together before the Lord, in the Tabernacle of Witnesses. And on the Morrow, when Moses went in, and brought forth all the Rods, from before the Lord, unto all the Children of Israel, and they took every Man his Rod, and looked on it, behold, the Rod of Aaron, for the House of Levi, had Sprouted, and put forth Buds, and brought forth Blossoms, and bare ripe Almonds.

This must needs be a wonderful, and astonishing thing in it self, that a dry Stick should, in one Nights time, shoot forth, Bud, Blossom, and bare Ripe Fruits: And a convincing Token to them, that God had singled out Aaron to the Priestly Office, that of all the Twelve Sticks laid together, his Stick only should produce this Wonder.

The matter being thus incontestably determined and settled, the Lord bid Moses bring Aaron's Rod back again, and lay it up before the Ark of the Testimony; to be kept for a Token against the Rebels, and that it might quite take away their Murmurings, and so prevent their Death. But as great Tumults are not soon settled, and high Discontents are not quickly quieted: So this People could not yet give o'er complaining. Behold, (said they to Moses) we die, we perish, we all perish. (Some fall by the Sword, Chap. 14. 45. Some are swallowed up by the Earth, Chap. 16. 32. Some perish by Fire, ver. 35. and some die of the Plague, ver. 49.) shall we (said they) be consumed with dying? Thus they reckoned up their Calamities, the Punishments for their Rebellions: But considered not, that they themselves brought them on themselves, by Rebellious.

The 18th Chapter of this Book is spent in setting forth the Charge of *Numb. 18.* the Priests and Levites distinctly, with the distinct Portions, or Provision of Maintenance for each. Wherein (not to descend to all Particulars) it is observable, that the Priests, who were anointed to that Office,

and unto whom the Charge of the *Tabernacle* and *Sanctuary*, with the *Numb. 18.* *Vessels* thereof, and all the *Hallowed* things, were committed, had not the *Tithes* given to them: For the *Tithes* were given to the *Levites*, who were employed in the *laborious* part of the Work about the *Tabernacle*. But the *Priests* had the *Offerings* of the People (the *Meat-offerings*, *Sin-offerings*, *Trespass-offerings*, *Heave-offerings*, *Wave-offerings*, the *First-Fruits*;) and the *Tithes* of the *Tithes*, which they were to receive from the *Levites*, who received the *Tithes* from the People. And these *Tithes* of *Tithes*, which the *Priests* were to receive from the *Levites*, were to be offered by the *Levites*, an *Heave-offering* to the Lord; as the *Tithes* themselves which were given to the *Levites*, were offered an *Heave-offering* to the Lord before. So that all the *Tithes*, as well those from the People to the *Levites*, as those (out of them) from the *Levites* to the *Priests*, were by this Ceremony of *Heaving*, rendred as completely a Part of the *Ceremonial Law*, as the rest of the *Offerings* under that Dispensation were.

Numb. 19. The 19th Chapter treateth of Legal *Pollutions* and *Uncleanesses*, and of the *Water of Separation* or Purification, by which such were to be cleansed; directing how it should be both made and used: Which Water was a lively, and very significant *Type* of the *Blood* of *Christ*; who, being himself *Perfectly Clean*, by sprinkling cleanseth the *Unclean*: not *notially*, but *really*, and in very deed.

By the Interposition of these other matters, contained in these two Chapters, we miss the Account how the Children of *Israel* came to *Kadesh* again, in the *Wilderness* of *Zin*; where we find them, in chap. 20. Only *Moses* briefly reciting some of their *Frauds*, in *Deut. 2.* tells us, That after they had been beaten by the *Amalekites* and *Amorites*, for which compare *Deut. 1. 44.* with *Numb. 14. 45.*) they turned and took their Journey into the *Wilderness*, by the way of the *Red-sea*, (as God had commanded, *Numb. 14. 25*) and compassed *Mount-Seir* many days (which both *Tremellius* and the *Bishops Bible*, in their Notes, account to be *Eight and Thirty Years*;) till at length the Lord said, Ye have compassed this Mountain long enough, turn ye Northwards, *Deut. 2. 3.*

A. M. Being come to *Kadesh*; while the People abode there, *Miriam* (who *2553.* was Sister to *Aaron* and *Moses*, and elder than either) died, and was buried there. *Numb. 20.*

Here again the People, impatient of any *Inconvenience*, brake out for want of *Water*. And gathering themselves together against *Moses* and *Aaron*, they quarrelled with them, saying, *Why have ye brought up the Congregation of the Lord into this Wilderness, that we, and our Cattel, should die there? And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us into this evil Place; where are neither Seed, nor Figs, nor Vines, nor Pomegranates, nor so much as Water to drink? Would God we had died, when our Brethren died before the Lord.*

Moses and *Aaron*, thus hard beset, betake themselves to the Lord for help. And the Lord bad *Moses* take the *Rod*, and he and his Brother *Aaron* gather the Assembly together; and then *Speak ye* (said the Lord) *to the Rock, in their sight, and it shall give forth his Water, and thou shalt bring forth to them Water out of the Rock.*

Moses hereupon taking the *Rod* from before the Lord, went, and with *Aaron's* Assistance, gathered the Congregation together, before the *Rock*. But when he was come thither, deviating from his Instructions (tho' seemingly but a little) he committed his greatest *Miscarriage*.

For first, whereas he was bid *Speak* to the *Rock* before the People, he, instead of doing so, *Spake* to the People before the *Rock*. And in what he

he said to them, he discovered not only *Impatience*, and Heat of Spirit, but too much also of *Incredulity*, as making a Doubt or Question of that, *Numb. 20.* which the Lord had expressly and positively promised. *Hear now, ye Rebels,* said he, *Must we fetch you Water out of this Rock?*

Secondly, he was not bid to *Strike* the Rock, but to speak to it. He instead of *Speaking* to it, lift up his Hand, and with his Rod *Smote* the Rock; and that *twice*: which shewed an angry disturbed Mind.

If it should be asked, To what End he was commanded to take the Rod, if it was not intended he should *Smite* the Rock with it? The Answer is, Perhaps it might be, that the People, at sight of that Rod, by which they had seen so many *Miracles* wrought, if it was *that* Rod by which *Moses* divided the Red-sea (as some think it was:) Or that, by which they had been so lately *reclaimed* from a former *Rebellion*, and which yet bore a *Miracle* upon it, if it was *that* Rod that budded and bore *Almonds* (which others think it was) might see their Error, repent and confess that *nothing was too hard* for their God.

If it be alledged on *Moses* his Behalf, That when he was sent to the Rock before (*Exod. 17. 5, 6.*) he was bid to take his Rod in his Hand, and to *Smite* the Rock, that the Water might come forth; and that from thence he might gather, he was now also to *Smite* the Rock with his Rod. The Answer is, As there he exactly followed his Instructions: So he should have done here. He *Smote* the Rock then, because he was *Bidden*: But he did not *Speak* to it then, because he was *not Bidden*. So he should now have *Spoken* to it, because he *was Bidden*: And not have *Smitten* it, because he was *not Bidden*. For God is an *Absolute Sovereign*, and expects an *Absolute* and *Exact* Obedience to his *Absolute* Commands. Nor will he allow *even a Moses* to vary his Command, or mix his own *Conceptions* with it, unpunished. And therefore, tho' he would not lose the Honour of his *Miracle* for his Servants *Fault*, but caused the Water to come abundantly out of the Rock, for the Congregation to drink, and the Cattel also: Yet he denounced to *Moses* and *Aaron* (who was in the Transgression with him) their Doom, in these Words; *Because ye believed me not, to Sanctify me in the sight of the Children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this Congregation into the Land which I have given them.*

While yet the *Israelitish* Camp was at *Kadesh*, *Moses* sent an *Ambassy* to the King of *Edom* (whose Borders they were now upon) to inform him of the Travels and Labour of the Children of *Israel* (his Brethren by the same both Father and Mother, *Isaac* and *Rebekah*) and to intreat *Passage* through his Country; giving him *Assurance*, that they would not commit any Act of *Hostility* nor *trespass* in his Fields or Vineyards, nor so much as *drink of his Water* (without paying for it:) but only travel on the King's High-way. But the King of *Edom* utterly refused it, and drew out his *Forces* to impede their *Passage*, and defend his *Frontiers*. *Israel* therefore (being forbidden by God to fight with them, *Deut. 2. 5.*) turned another way; and marching from *Kadesh*, came to Mount *Hor*.

It was now the beginning of the Fifth Month, into the Fortieth Year of their Travels from *Egypt* (*Numb. 33. 38.*) and the time drew near for their entering the good Land; into which the Lord had told *Aaron* he should not enter, because of his Transgression at *Meribah* (so was the Place called where *Moses* smote the Rock, *Numb. 20. 13.*) Wherefore being now come to Mount *Hor*, the Lord gave *Aaron* Notice of his approaching Death; and commanded *Moses* to take *Aaron* and *Elcazer* his Son (who was to succeed him in the Office of high Priest) and bringing them up into Mount *Hor*, there to strip *Aaron* of

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of his Prietly Garments, and put them upon *Eleazar* his Son. Which when *Moses* had done, in the sight of all the Congregation, *Aaron* died there, in the Top of Mount *Hor*, being an Hundred Twenty and Three Years old, (*Numb.* 33. 39.) And when the Congregation saw that *Aaron* was dead, all the House of *Israel* mourned for him Thirty Days.

Israel being now come to the Border of *Canaan*, *Arad*, a King of the *Canaanites*, which dwelt in the South, hearing which way they came, went out and fought them, and took some of them Prisoners. *Israel* thereupon made a Vow to the Lord, saying, *If thou wilt indeed deliver this People into my Hand, then I will utterly destroy their Cities.* And the Lord delivering up the *Canaanites* to them, they did utterly destroy both them and their Cities; and called the Name of the Place, where the Battel was fought, *Hormah*, which signifies *Utter Destruction*. This seems to be the same Place, to which these *Amalckites* had beaten and chased *Israel*, about Eight and Thirty Years ago, *Numb.* 14. 45.

This Victory obtained, the Camp was fain to dislodge from Mount *Hor*, and take their March by the way of the Red Sea, to compass the Land of *Edom*; through which they had been denied Passage, (*chap.* 20. 18, 21.) and forbidden to force their Way (*Deut.* 2. 5.) And because the Way was long, the Passages uneasy, and the Country Barren, the People being straitned in their Minds, and under great Discouragements, let up the *Murmuring Spirit* again, and spake against God directly, as well as against *Moses*. *Wherefore* (said they) *have ye brought us up out of Egypt, to die in the Wilderness?* (This was their constant Complaint.) *For here's neither Meat, nor Drink to be had, cried they; and our Soul loatheth, (our Stomachs turn against) this Contemptible Bread:* Meaning the Manna, which God had given them, ready prepared for their Mouths.

To punish therefore this *bold Impiety*, the Lord sent *Fiery Serpents* amongst them, which bit them; so that many of the People died upon it. This made the rest humble themselves, saying to *Moses*, *We have sinned: For we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee. Pray now the Lord, that he take away the Serpents from us.*

Here I cannot but observe, how like this People were to *Pharaoh*, *Rebelling* and *Relenting*; *Rebelling* again, and *Relenting* again, according as *Judgments* were laid on them: As if they had learn'd of him.

However *Moses*, at their Request, prayed unto the Lord for them. But the Lord did not immediately take away the Serpents: but leaving them to be a *Scourge* to the People, to make them more sensible of their *Transgression*, provided a *Remedy*, to prevent their Death, and heal their Hurts. For he ordered *Moses* to make a *Serpent*, of a *Fiery Colour*, and set it up for a *Sign* (or *Ensign*) that the People who were bitten by the *Fiery Serpents*, might, by looking up to this Serpent, be recovered. *Moses* thereupon made the Form of a *Serpent* in *Brass*, and set it up, as a *Banner*; and it came to pass, that when afterwards a Serpent bit any Man, if he looked upon that *Brasen Serpent*, he lived, that is, he was healed.

This *Brasen Serpent*, a significant Type of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, (who being lifted up as an *Ensign for the Nations*, *Isai.* 11. 12. gives Life and Salvation to all them that in true Faith look up unto him) remained among the *Jews* above Seven Hundred Years, to the time of *Hezekiah*, King of *Judah*; who in an *Holy Zeal*, pursuant to God's Command (*Exod.* 23. 24. *Deut.* 7. 5.) removing the *High-places*, breaking the *Images*, and cutting down the *Groves*, brake also in pieces this *Brasen Serpent* among the rest, (tho' *Moses*, by the express Command of God had made

made it, and it was a Piece of so great Antiquity) because he found the People had, of a long time, committed Idolatry, in burning Incense to it. And to put Contempt upon it, he called it *Nehushtan*, a piece of Brass only, 2 Kings 18. 4. Numb. 21.

After that the Children of *Israel*, by several Removes in their Journies were come to the Top of *Pisgah* (the Hill,) which looketh towards *Jeshimon* (the Wilderness;) they sent Ambassadors to *Sihon*, King of the *Amorites*, to desire Passage through his Land, promising not to break into the Fields or Vineyards, nor to drink of the Waters (a scarce Commodity in those hot Countries:) But only to go along by the King's High-way, till they should be past his Borders. A. M. 2553.

The *Amorite* King, not thinking it safe to receive such a numerous Host of unsettled People into the Heart of his Kingdom, gave them an absolute denial of Passage. And holding it better Policy to assault, than be assaulted, he gathered all his People together, and marching out into the Wilderness against *Israel*, gave them Battel at *Jabaz*; which signifies, *Strife*.

But *Israel* smote him with the edge of the Sword, and gave the *Amorites* such a Total Defeat, that they possessed their Land from one end to the other; and taking their Cities and Villages, dwelt in them. And because *Israel* was not suffered to fight against *Moab*, (Deut. 2. 9.) this *Amorite* King had before fought with the King of *Moab*, and taken *Heshbon* and the other Places from him; which now, by this Conquest fell to *Israel*.

Israel being thus possessed of the Land of the *Amorites*, and dwelling in it; *Moses* sent some to spy out *Jaazar* (a City where dwelt another Party of the *Amorites*) and they took the Villages thereof, and drove out the *Amorites* that were there.

Then turning, they went by the way of *Bashan*, where reigned King *Og*, another *Amorite* King, and the last of the Race of the *Giants* there; whose Stature may be guessed at by the Size of his Bed, which being made of Iron for Strength, was Nine Cubits in Length, and Four Cubits in Breadth, after the Cubit of a Man, which being the Common Cubit, containing Half a Yard, or one Foot and a half, English Measure, if reduced to Yards or Feet, will yield Four Yards and a half, or Thirteen Feet and a half, for the Length, and Two Yards, or Six Feet for the Breadth of the Bed.

This Monster of a King came forth against *Israel*, he and all his People, to the Battel at *Edrei*; a fit Place for him to exercise his Arms, and shew his Prowess in: For it signifies, *The Heap of Strength*, or *Might*. But lest the *Israelites* should be dismayed at the sight of such a Champion, the Lord prepared them, by bidding *Moses* fear him not: For I (said he) have delivered him into thy Hand, and all his People and his Land: And thou shalt do to him as thou didst to *Sihon* King of the *Amorites*.

Israel, thus encouraged, joined the Battel, and slew King *Og*, and his Sons, and all his People, until there was none left him alive. They took also all his Cities, Threescore in Number, all fenced with high Walls, Gates and Bars; besides unwall'd Towns a great many: Destroying utterly the Inhabitants, both Men, Women and Children; but keeping all the Cattel and the Spoil of the Cities, for a Prey to themselves, as they had done before in the Case of *Sihon*, the other *Amorite* King, Deut. 3. 4, 5, 6, 7. and as they were commanded, Deut. 20. where the *Fecial Laws*, or *Laws of War* and *Heraldry* are set down. By which Laws they were required, upon their Approach to any City, that was at a distance from them, to offer Peace in the first Place:

Numb. 21.

Which if the Inhabitants accepted, and surrendered to them, they should only make them *Tributaries*. But if they refused Peace, and put them to besiege, and storm the Place; they should, when they had taken it, put *all the Men to the Sword*: But might keep the *Women and Little Ones*, with the Cattel, and other Spoil for themselves.

Thus for the Cities of the *Remoter Countries*: But of the Cities of those Neighbouring People, which the Lord had given them for an Inheritance, as particularly and by Name, the *Hittites* and *Amorites*, the *Canaanites* and *Perizzites*, the *Hivites* and *Jebusites*, they were to *save none alive*; but utterly to destroy all, both Men, Women and Children.

Now as this Execution was a *Type* of the *Spiritual Warfare*, against the Soul's Enemies; of which none, Old or Young, great or small, are to be spared, or saved alive: So the *Political Reason* of this *Martial Severity*, is given in the next Verse, *That they teach you not to do after their Abominations, which they have done unto their Gods: So should ye Sin against the Lord your God*. So that it seems to have been a kind of *se defendendo*: A destroying them, lest they should tempt, and draw you to do that, which would provoke the Lord to *destroy you*.

Flesh'd with these Victories, the Children of *Israel* now set forward, and pitched in the Plains of *Moab*, on this side *Jordan*, by *Jericho*.

This put *Balak*, King of *Moab*, into a *great Fright*: For he had seen (that is, he had understood) how *Israel* had dealt with his Neighbours, the *Amorites*. And the People of *Moab*, as well as their King, seeing so great an Host lying before them, in their Neighbouring Plains, were *fore afraid*, and even distressed in their Minds, because of the Children of *Israel*: Whereas had they known the *Protection* they were under, they needed not have been afraid: For they, if they would have been quiet, were particularly *exempted* from *Israel's* Sword, *Deut.* 2. 9.

But *Balak* not knowing that, but knowing himself too weak in Forces to cope with *Israel* in Battel, called the *Elders* of *Midian* to Council, who either lived amongst the *Moabites*, or were their near Neighbours and *Allies*. And having proposed to them the *common Danger*, and advised together about it, the Result of their *Consultation* was, that King *Balak* should send Messengers to *Balaam* the Son of *Beor*, who lived at *Pethor* (a City in *Mesopotamia*, *Deut.* 23. 4.) to invite, and hire him to come and *curse* the People of *Israel*.

This *Balaam* was a *Wizard* or *Diviner*, in so great Reputation amongst those Idolatrous People, for his Skill and Cunning in *Divinations*, and especially in *Fascinations*, that they really thought (or, to gratify his *Ambition*, and draw him the more readily to come, pretended that they thought) *every one blessed, whom he blessed; and cursed, whom he cursed*.

Having deputed therefore a select Number of the Elders, or Princes of each People, *Moabites* and *Midianites*, joyned in an *Ambassy* together, the King sent them to him: With the *Rewards* of *Divination* in their Hands. For they well knew he was *Covetous*, and extremely greedy of *Gain*. And indeed, that was the *Bait* that caught him: *He loved the Wages of Unrighteousness*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 15. Yet when they came to him, and had delivered their Message from the King, he pretended so much Regard to the Lord, that he would not give them an Answer, till he had consulted him.

To try how *Balaam* would represent the Matter, God askt him. *What Men those were that were with him? They are some*, said he, *whom*

whom the King of Moab hath sent, to let me know, that there is a People come out of Egypt, which covereth the Face of the Earth; and to desire me to come to him, and Curse them, in hopes that then he may be able to overcome them, and drive them away. But, said God to him, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not Curse that People: For they are Blessed.

Balaam, well knowing how unsafe it would be for him to go against the Command of the Lord, Got up in the Morning, and dismissed the Princes of Balak; saying, Get ye into your own Land: For the Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you. This shews he asked leave, and would have gone. The Princes returning to their King, misreport to him Balaam's Answer: For instead of telling him that God refused to let him come, they tell him, that Balaam refused to come.

Balak, from this Answer, might probably think, that either the Number and Quality of his Messengers did not Answer Balaam's Ambition; or the Value of the Rewards, his Covetousness. For he forthwith sent to him again, more Princes, and those too more honourable, than the former; and with Proposals of higher Terms. Let nothing, I pray thee (said he, by his Ambassadors) hinder thee from coming to me: For I will promote thee unto very great Honour; and I will do whatsoever thou sayest to me (or, I will give thee whatsoever thou wilt ask,) Come therefore, I pray thee, Curse me this People.

Balaam's Answer shews the Temper of his Mind, and what he would have been at. He did not say, I dislike the Work; and therefore have no mind to go with you. But he tells them, If Balak will give me his House full of Silver and Gold, I CANNOT go beyond the Word of the Lord my God. The Word of the Lord to him was expressly, Thou shalt not go: Thou shalt not Curse the People. God had laid a Restraint upon him, that he Could not go; tho' fain he would.

Yet so greedy was he of the promised Reward, that he would try if he could prevail with God to break his Word, to alter his Command, and let him go. Therefore he fawns upon the Messengers, and prays them to tarry with him that Night also; that he might know what the Lord would say unto him more. This was Tempting God: Who therefore, in Displeasure, left him to follow his own Will. So to do, hath not been unusual with God, when provoked by Disobedience.

Thus he dealt with the Israelites afterwards, when they, rejecting his Government, would needs have a King, that they might be like other Nations, 1 Sam. 8. 7. He answered their desire, and gave them a King: But he did it in his Anger (Hosea 13. 11.) And at other times, when they would not hearken to him, he gave them up unto their own Hearts Lusts, and let them walk in their own Counsels, Psa. 81. 11, 12.

Thus he dealt with Balaam here. He had told him his Mind plainly and fully. Balaam would not take it for an Answer: But would try him again. Provoked thereby, God tells him, If the Men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them. This I take to be, not a Command, but a Permission. As if he had said, Well! Seeing thou art so eager to go, tho' thou knowest it is against my mind; take thy own Course: Go, if thou wilt. But yet thou shalt not obtain thine End: For the Word which I shall speak unto thee, that shalt thou do, tho' against thine own Will.

That this suffering him to go, was in Displeasure to him, appears from God's Anger being kindled against him for going; and sending his Angel to stop him on the way: For upon this Concession, up got Balaam in the Morning, and away he went with the Princes of Moab; having his Two Servants to wait on him: Probably, both for the greater State; and to bring back the Treasure he hoped to receive. But God's Anger

Numb. 22. Anger was kindled because he went; and the Angel of the Lord stood in the way, for an *Adversary* against him. Whence, besides the plain proof, that *Balaam* went but by *Permission*, and that the *Permission* was granted in *Displeasure* to him; this useful Observation arises, viz. That, *whosoever goeth to Curse whom God hath Blessed, shall be sure to have God an Adversary in his way.*

The Angel of the Lord stood in the way, with his drawn Sword in his Hand; yet so blind was *Balaam*, that he saw him not, tho' the silly *Ass* could both see and shun him: For the *Ass*, turning out of the way, carried him into a Field; for which he Smote her, to bring her into the way again, And when the Angel removing forward, stood in a Path that had a Wall on each side; the *Ass*, to shun the Angel, thrusting close up to the Wall, chrusht *Balaam's* Foot against it: For which he Smote her again. But when the Angel, going further, stood in a narrow Place, where there was no way to turn, either to one Hand, or t'other; the *Ass*, rather than Expose her Master to the Angel's Sword, fell down under him: And then he Smote her with his Staff. So eager is Man, blinded with desire of Riches, Honours, Pleasures, &c. to rush on to his own Destruction.

Now the Lord, to rebuke the Iniquity, and forbid the Madness of the Prophet, opened the Mouth of the *Ass*, enabling her to speak with Man's Voice. Which strange and unnatural Thing, enough of it self, one would think, to have scared another Man out of his Wits, (and him, if his Wits had not been gone a Wool-gathering, that is, seeking Profit, intent and wholly taken up in contriving how to make Earnings of his Journey,) he took no notice of: But held a Dialogue with the *Ass*, till the Lord was pleased to rouse him, by opening his Eyes, and letting him see the Angel standing in his way, with his Sword drawn in his Hand; at the sight of which, he bowed himself down, and fell flat on his Face: For instant danger will make the most wicked Men bow.

Then, upon the Angel's Expostulating with him, telling him his way, (that is, his Purpose, or the Undertaking he went upon) was perverse before the Lord (for he had a mind to do that which the Lord had forbidden him;) that therefore he was come out to withstand him, and had slain him, but for his *Ass* which he had so ungratefully beaten:) *Balaam* confessed he had sinned, and faintly offered to go back, if his Journey displeased the Lord. But it appears, this was but a Copy of his Countenance, by his laying it upon an *If*. If my going displease thee, I will get me back again. He needed not have made an [*If*] of it: For he knew well enough, that from the first it displeased the Lord, and that at the first he had positively forbidden him to go.

But now that he was gone so far, the Lord would not send him back; but resolving to turn his Evil Purpose to a Good End for his People, by making him, who was hired to Curse, pronounce a Blessing on them: Having given him this Cautionary Correction by the way, he suffered him to go on, but with this Charge, Only the Word that I shall speak unto thee, shalt thou speak. And so on went *Balaam*, with the Princes of *Balak*.

Now when *Balak* understood that *Balaam* was coming, that he might engage him the more by personal Respects, he went out in Person to meet him, to the utmost Coast of his Country. And when he had, after their first Salutation, gently blamed him, for not coming to him, at the first sending, who was so able to promote him to Honour; and *Balaam*, in excuse, had let him know, what a Restraint the Lord had laid upon him: He treated him, with the Princes, at a solemn Feast that Day; and the next Day brought him up into the

High

High Places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost part of the People; in order to curse them.

How oft, since that, have the *Successors of Balaam*, out of love to the *Wages of Unrighteousness*, endeavoured to *Curse* the *Israel* of God, from the *High-Places of Baal*!

Balaam thus got into the *High-Places of Baal*, directs *Balak* to cause *seven* Altars to be built for him there; and *seven* Oxen with *seven* Rams, to be prepared. Which when *Balak* had done, they together offered a Bullock and a Ram upon each Altar. Then leaving *Balak* to stand by his *Burnt-offering*, *Balaam* went aside; to see if the Lord would meet him: And the Lord did meet him, and put a Word in his Mouth, charging him what he should say. Numb. 23.

Returning therefore to *Balak* (whom he found standing by his *Burnt-sacrifice*, and all the Princes of *Moab* with him, *Balaam* took up his *Parable*, and said, *Balak the King of Moab hath brought me from Aram* (or Syria) out of the Mountains of the East, saying, *Come, Curse me Jacob, and come, curse Israel. But how shall I Curse whom God hath not cursed? Or how shall I curse, whom the Lord hath not defied?* For from the Top of the Rocks I see him (God their Protector,) and from the Hills I behold him. Lo, the People shall dwell alone (they shall be separated to God, and distinguished from all other People, in Religion, Laws, and Course of Life; a true Figure of the Spiritual Israel :) They shall not be reckoned among the Nations.

Then to set forth the *Prosperity* and *Encrease* of *Israel*, he brake forth into *Admiration* thus; *Who can count the Dust of Jacob, and the Number of the Fourth part of Israel!* And, to shew how happy and blessed they should be, *Let me die*, said he, *the Death of the Righteous*; and let my last End be like his.

How great a *Disappointment* this was to *Balak*, may be gathered from his *Answer* to *Balaam*. *What hast thou done unto me*, said he? *I took thee to Curse mine Enemies, and behold, thou hast Blessed them altogether.*

Balaam excused himself by the necessity he was under, to speak that which the Lord had put in his Mouth. As much as to say, Indeed, I could not help it; *I would have Cursed them, if I could*: But I could not; I had not power to speak what I would, for my Mouth was filled, and directed by the Lord.

And indeed, if we consider what *Moses* told the *Israelites*, *Deut. 23. 5.* [*Nevertheless the Lord thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but turned the Curse into a Blessing to thee:*] We may well conclude, that *Balaam* did earnestly labour with God, by *Perswasion* or *Intreaty*, to have had liberty to have Cursed *Israel*.

Balak hoping that what he had missed of in one Place, he might find in another, brought *Balaam* into the Field of *Zophim*, to the Top of *Pisgab*, to see if he could Curse them from thence. And *Balaam*, as willing to please him, had *seven Altars* builded there, and a Bullock with a Ram offered on each. Then going aside, as before, to meet the Lord, he had a word put in his Mouth again, by the Lord, with a Charge what he should say.

By this time *Balak* began to understand, that the Lord was to be consulted in the Case. Wherefore, when *Balaam* returned to him (as he, with the Princes of *Moab*, big with Expectation, stood by his *Burnt-offering*) he asked him, *What hath the Lord spoken?* Whereupon *Balaam*, to bespeak the greater Attention and Regard to what he should say, began thus;

Rise up, *Balak*, and hear; hearken unto me, thou Son of *Zippor*. God (who hath already Blessed *Israel*, and forbidden me to Curse them,)

is not a Man, that he should lie; neither the Son of Man, that he should
Numb. 23. repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and
shall he not make it good? Behold, I have received Commandment to bless:
For he hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it. (I would, if I could, but I
cannot. For) He hath not beheld Iniquity in Jacob: Neither hath he seen
Perverseness in Israel. (This may be taken rather of the Father, than
the Children; especially being spoken in the Præterit Tense.) The Lord
his God is with him, and the shout of a King is in him. (so Hierom, Arias
Montanus, and Tremellius and Junius turn it.) God brought them out of
Egypt: He hath, as it were, the Strength of an Unicorn. (So that it is in
vain to attempt any thing by force against them; and to as little pur-
pose to use Fascinations or Enchantments: For) Surely no Enchantment
can prevail against Jacob; nor any Divination against Israel. So that, ac-
cording to this time, it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath
God wrought! (who hath both set a Defence about Israel, that neither
Force nor Fraud can reach them; and hath turned the intended Curse
into a Blessing.) Then, prophesying of the future Strength, Victories
and Success of Israel, he added, The People shall rise up as a great Lion,
and lift up himself as a young Lion: He shall not lye down until he eat
of the Prey, and drink the Blood of the Slain.

This to Balak was worse, than if Balaam had said nothing: Therefore he bid him, *Neither Curse them at all, nor Bless them at all.* But he held not long in that mind: For tho' he had rather Israel should *scape a Cursing, than receive a Blessing;* Yet his *Eagerness* to have them *Cursed*, made him willing to try once more.

Come, I pray thee, said he to Balaam, *and I will bring thee unto another Place: Peradventure it will please God, that thou mayest Curse me them from thence.* That said, away he leads him to the Top of Peor, a Hill that looked towards *Jeshimon*, or the Wilderness. And tho' Balaam had, but just before, declared, that God was not as a Man, to *lye, or repent:* Yet, pricked forward with the desire of getting the Reward, he fell in again with wicked Balak, to tempt God a-new; causing *seven Altars* to be built there also, and offering a Bullock, with a Ram, on each. And God, who brings good out of evil, suffered him thus to run on; that he might thence take occasion to multiply his *Blessings* upon his Israel.

Numb. 24. But Balaam, having tried in vain all his *Magical Tricks;* and now seeing, that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, went not (as at other times, under pretence of Meeting the Lord,) to seek for *Enchantments:* But set his Face directly towards the Wilderness, in which Israel lay encamped. And when, lifting up his Eyes, he saw them abiding in that excellent Order, wherein they were disposed, *chap. 2.)* according to their Tribes, the Spirit of God came upon him.

Before, while he sought to work by *Enchantments*, he had only a word put into his Mouth: But now, having laid aside his *Enchantments*, the Spirit of God came upon him. Whereby his Eyes, which before were shut, being now somewhat opened, he cried out, *How goodly are thy Tents, O Jacob; and thy Tabernacles, O Israel.*

Then by Significant Metaphors, setting forth the Extent, Fertility, sweet Savour, and stately Strength of Israel, he says, *As the Vallies are they spread forth; As Gardens by the Rivers side; As the Trees of Lign-aloes, which the Lord hath planted; and as Cedar-Trees beside the Waters. He shall pour the Water out of his Buckets, and his Seed shall be in many Waters. His King shall be higher than Agag, and his Kingdom shall be exalted. (For Agag was a common Appellative for the Kings of Amalek, as Pharaoh was for the Kings of Egypt: and Amalek being then the most flourishing Kingdom, was pitcht on for the Comparison.)* Then

Then going on, he adds, *God brought him (Israel) out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an Unicorn: He shall eat up the Nations his Enemies, and shall break their Bones, and pierce them through with his Arrows. He couched; he lay down as a Lion, and as a great Lion. Who shall raise him up? Blessed is he that blesteth thee (heartily, and with a good will; not, as Balaam did, against his will :) And Cursed is he that curseth thee.* Numb. 24.

These words kindled Balak's Anger against Balaam, to that height, that smiting his hands together (a Token of great displeasure) and upbraiding Balaam with having *deceived* him, in *blessing* those whom he was sent for to *curse*, he bid him *haste* and be gone: For I thought, said he, to have promoted thee to great Honour, (if thou hadst answered my design, in cursing *Israel*) but the Lord hath kept thee back from Honour.

Balaam had recourse to his old Excuse, That *he could not help it*, being *over-ruled* by the Lord, and made to speak what he put into his Mouth. But that he might not go away, without *gratifying* Balak in some sort; and perhaps, that he might intitle himself to some *Gratuity* from him, he offered to advertise, or inform him, now at parting, *What this People should do to his People, in the latter days, or time to come.* Which having done, from *ver. 15.* to the end of this Chapter; he then also (as may well be supposed) taught Balak how to betray *Israel*, and draw them into *Fornication* and *Idolatry*, which soon after followed: And which *Moses*, in *chap. 31. 16.* doth plainly refer to the Counsel of Balaam.

For the very next Account we have of *Israel* is, that they abode in *Shittim*; which signifies, *Turning aside*: And they turned aside indeed, so far as to *commit Whoredom with the Daughters of Moab, and Midian.* Numb. 25.

Now these Daughters of *Moab* or *Midian*, (or both: For as they lived promiscuously, so it is evident from *chap. 31. 16.* there were of both People concerned in this *Treacherous Plot* against *Israel*) allured the People to partake with them of the *Sacrifices* of their Gods; and *the People did eat, and bowed down to their Gods.* So that *Israel* joined himself to *Baal-peor* (supposed to be the beastly *Priapus*, or lecherous God) for which the Anger of the Lord was kindled against *Israel*.

Whence we may observe, That to *partake* of the *Sacrifices*, or *Religious Performances*, of those who are not God's peculiar People, (tho' they be such as sprang from a Righteous Stock, as *Moab* from *Lot*, and *Midian* from *Abraham*; and to *bow down* (in such Performances) with them, is to *joyn to the Object* of their Adoration, whatever it be.

How great this Offence was in the Sight of God, may be seen in the Punishment inflicted for it. For hereupon the Lord commanded *Moses* to *take all the Heads of the People* (understand it of those Heads only, and of that part of the People, that had joyned themselves to *Baal-peor*) and *hang them up before the Lord, against the Sun*, (that is, openly, in the Sight of all;) that the fierce Anger of the Lord might be turned away from *Israel*.

Moses therefore gave Charge unto the *Judges* of *Israel* (those whom, by the Advice of his Father-in-law, *Jethro*, with God's Approbation, he had set over the People, *Exod. 18.*) to see *Execution* done, every one on the Men under his Charge, that were joyned unto *Baal-peor*. Whereupon a *Thousand* of the *Princes*, or *Heads* of the People, are supposed to have been thus executed. But the Matter stopt not there.

For

For a bold young Man, whose Name was *Zimri*, (probably a jolly
 Numb. 25. Blade, for his Name signifies *Singing*,) the Son of *Salu*, (which signifies
 A. M. Exaltation, or treading under Foot,) a Prince of a chief House among
 2553. the *Simeonites*, took *Cozbi*, (which signifies a *Liar*) the Daughter of
Zur, (which signifies *Strong*,) who also was a Prince of a chief House
 in *Midian*; and daringly brought her unto his Brethren, in contempt
 of *Moses*, and in the sight of all the Congregation of the Children of
Israel, who (because of the fresh Execution done upon their Princes,
 stood weeping before the Door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation:
 And leading her openly into his Tent, there lay with her.

Which daring Act, and open Violation of God's Law, when *Phineas*
 (*Aaron's* Grandson) saw, and that none of the Judges took Cognizance
 of it; he rose up from amongst the Congregation, and filled with a Di-
 vine Zeal, taking a *Javelin* in his Hand, he followed them into the
 Tent: And taking them in the very Act of Whoredom, thrust them
 both through, as they lay, both the Man, and the Woman, through her
 Belly.

This zealous Act of *Phineas* put a stop to the Plague, which, for
 this audacious Act of *Zimri's* and the other Whoredoms of his Come-
 rades, the Lord had sent among the People. Yet there died, on this
 occasion, no less than *Four and Twenty Thousand*. In which number, it
 is probable, *Moses* does include the *Thousand* Princes that were hang'd
 for it. Which Computation, reconciles this place to that of the Apostle,
 1 Cor. 10. 8. where he mentions but *Three and Twenty Thousand*.

So acceptable was this Service of *Phineas* to the Lord, that the Lord
 not only commended him highly for it, saying, *Phineas bath turned my*
Wrath away from the Children of Israel, (while he was zealous for my Sake
 among them) that I consumed not the Children of *Israel* in my Jealousie:
 But also rewarded him with his Covenant of Peace, in the Enjoyment of
 the Priesthood, Saying, Behold, I give unto him my Covenant of Peace,
 and he shall have it, and his Seed after him; even the Covenant of an
 everlasting Priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made an
 Atonement for the Children of *Israel*.

This Rebellion thus suppressed, the Offenders punished, and *Phineas*,
 for his godly Zeal, Rewarded; the next thing was, to take Vengeance
 on the *Midianites* (under which Name, I take the *Moabites* also, in
 this Case, to be comprehended,) for their having betrayed *Israel* into
 this Snare and Mischiefe. In order whereunto, the Lord gave *Moses* or-
 der to vex the *Midianites*, and smite them: For they, (said he) vex you
 with their Wiles, wherewith they have beguiled you, in the matter of *Peor*,
 and in the matter of *Cozbi*. The matter of *Peor*, was their Idolatry, in
 eating of their Sacrifices, and bowing down to their Gods: The matter
 of *Cozbi* was the Whoredoms, ch. 25. 1. But this Order, being General and
 Preparatory, was repeated more fully and particularly afterwards, ch. 31.

Numb. 26. In the mean time, the Lord commanded that now, after this
 Plague, the People, that is the Males, should be numbred again:
 Where in the same Method was appointed to be taken, that was used
 in the former Numbring, ch. 1. For the other Tribes, being numbred
 with Respect to War, and to their possessing the Land, were Numbred
 from twenty Years old. But the *Levites*, being exempted from War, and
 excluded from Possessions, were numbred from a Month old.

The Account thereof is set down at large in chap. 26. And thereby it
 appears, that of all that were first numbred by *Moses* and *Aaron*, in the
 Wilderness of *Sinai*, chap. 1. there was not then a Man left alive,
 besides *Moses*, excepting only *Caleb* and *Joshua*. So that in less than
 forty Years, no less than Six Hundred, Three Thousand Five Hundred
 and

and Fifty grown Men (for so many were numbred, *chap. 1.* besides the Tribe of *Levi*,) died in the Wilderness, Three only excepted. And yet now, at the Second numbring, there was found Six Hundred, One Thousand, Seven Hundred and Thirty Men, of twenty Years old and upwards; besides the *Levites*: So greatly did the Lord encrease them.

After an *Enumeration* of divers *Laws* and *Ordinances* made and promulgated; *some more General*, as relating to the Daily Burnt-Offerings, and other Offerings upon particular Festivals: *Some more Particular*, as private Vows; and the settling of Inheritances in the *Female* Line, in defect of the Issue *Male*; *Midian* came again in remembrance before the Lord, and he renewed the Command he had given before to *Moses*, saying, *Avenge the Children of Israel of the Midianites*: And afterwards thou shalt be gathered to thy People.

Moses thereupon gave order that a Detachment of Twelve Thousand select Men, One Thousand out of every Tribe, should go against the *Midianites*, to avenge the Lord upon *Midian*: And zealous *Phineas* went along with them, having the Charge of the Holy Instruments.

This was a very little Host to invade a great and potent People: But the Lord who sent them, went with them; to whom, to prevail by many or by few, is alike. They were sent to *avenge* the Lord, and *Israel*, on the *Midianites*; and they did it with a Vengeance: For they slew Five Kings (or Dukes, *Josh. 13. 21.*) and all the Men; and among the rest the evil Prophet *Balaam*, who being on his way homewards, but not, it seems, gotten out of their reach, was found among the *Midianites*, and fell by *Israel's* Sword. They burned also all their Cities, and goodly Castles; and taking all the Women and Children Captives, they seized on their Cattle, flocks and Goods for a Prey, and with their Prisoners and Booty returned to the *Israelitish* Camp.

At their Return, *Moses*, with *Eleazar* the Priest, and all the Princes of the Congregation, went forth to meet them, without the Camp, to Congratulate their good Success. But when *Moses* saw the *Midianitish* Women among the Captives, he was much offended with the Officers of the Host, for saving them alive: For these (said he) caused the Children of *Israel*, thro' the Counsel of *Balaam* to commit Trespass against the Lord, in the matter of *Peor*; and thereby brought a Plague upon the Congregation of *Israel*. Therefore he commanded to kill every Male amongst the Little ones, and every Woman of the *Midianites*, that had lain with Man; and to save none alive, but the Women-Children that were Virgins. And that afterwards they should abide seven Days without the Camp; and both the Soldiers and the Prey should pass thro' the Ceremonies of the Legal Purification.

Which being performed, the Lord directed *Moses* to take an Account of the whole Prey, or Booty, taken in this Expedition; and dividing it into two equal Parts, to distribute one of those Parts amongst those Soldiers that had taken it, and the other Part amongst the whole Congregation. And that being done, he was to levy a Tribute unto the Lord, out of that Part which went to the Men of War, viz. the Five Hundredth Part, or one out of Five Hundred, of both Persons and Beasts. Which Tribute he was to give to *Eleazer* the Priest, for an Heave-offering of the Lord: So that still whatsoever came to the Priest, was by way of Ceremonial Offering. Out of the other part also, which the whole Congregation had, a Portion was taken, in the Proportion of a Fiftieth Part, or one out of Fifty, of both Persons and Beasts; and given to the *Levites*.

And after all this was done, the Officers of that Army, out of the other parts of the Booty which they had taken, viz. of Jewels of Gold,

R r

Chains,

Numb. 31. Chains, Bracelets, Rings, Ear-rings and Tablets, brought an Oblation to the Lord, both *Expiatory*, to make an *Atonement* for their Transgression, in having at the first saved the *Midianitish* Women: And *Eucharistical*, or *Gratulatory*, as an Offering of Thanksgiving, for so great a Victory given them. For besides the greatness of the Booty taken, (being no less than *Six Hundred Seventy and Five Thousand Sheep, Threescore and Twelve Thousand Beeves, and Threescore and One Thousand Asses*) the Slaughter which they made must needs be great, when the *Girls* which they saved alive were *Two and Thirty Thousand*: And all the rest of the People, both Men, Women and Children, were put to the Sword. But that *all this Execution* should be done, *without the Loss of one Man* on *Israel's* side (for so the Officers, upon a Muster, made Report,) may well pass for a *Miracle*, and be numbered amongst the *Battels of the Lord*.

Israel being thus possessed of the Countrey on this side *Jordan*; the 32. Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, observing it to be a Place of good *Pasturage*, and fit for *Cattel*, of which they had abundance, petitioned *Moses*, that that Land might be given unto them, for their Possession, so that they might not go over *Jordan*.

Moses understood them, that they designed to sit down there, in a whole *Skin*, (as the Saying is) in a Country ready gained: And leave their Brethren, the rest of the Tribes, to shift for themselves, in fighting with the *Canaanites*, and getting their Possessions on the other side of *Jordan*, as they could. Wherefore he blamed them for offering to discourage their Brethren, by such a *Proposition*: And put them in mind, how their Fathers formerly, by drawing back (as, he supposed, they would do) had provoked the Lord's Displeasure against themselves, to their own Destruction.

They thereupon let him know, that they only desired a *Grant* of that Countrey for their Inheritance, that they might build Cities therein for their Wives and Children, and Sheep-coats for their Flocks there, to secure them from Dangers: But that, as for themselves who were Men of War, *they all* (or at least, such a Number of them, as should be judged sufficient) would go ready armed before their Brethren, until they had brought them into their Place; and not return, until their Brethren, the Children of *Israel*, should be possessed every Man of his Inheritance. Which when *Moses* understood, he granted them their Request; upon Condition they performed their Promise: And not otherwise.

33. The 33d Chapter gives a particular Account of the several *Journies*, or *Stations* and *Removes*, which the Children of *Israel* made from *Rameses* in *Egypt*, to *Jordan* in *Canaan*.

34. The 34th Chapter describes the *Bounds* of the Promised Land, and gives the Names of the Persons appointed to divide it amongst the Tribes of *Israel*.

35. In the Five and Thirtieth Chapter order is given, That the Children of *Israel* should assign, and give unto the *Levites* Eight and Forty Cities, with Suburbs to them; wherein the *Levites* might live amongst the Tribes. Of which Number, Six were appointed to be *Cities of Refuge*, for the Manslayer to flee to, and be protected in, who had happened to kill a Man at unawares. But Provision was made, that he who should be duly Convicted of wilful Murder, should not be pardonable; but should surely be put to Death. Yet withal, That none should be convicted of any Capital Crime, by the Evidence of one single Witness.

And

And a Law having passed before (in *Chap. 27.*) to make Daughters capable of inheriting Lands, where the Heirs Male should fail; Consideration was now had (upon a Motion made by the Heads of the Tribe of *Manasseh*) of the Danger of *Transferring Estates of Inheritance* from one Tribe to another, in case such Heiresses should marry out of their own Tribe. To prevent which, a Law was now made, that every *Daughter*, who should possess an *Inheritance* in any Tribe of the Children of *Israel*, should be Wife unto one of the Family of the Tribe of her Father; that so the Children of *Israel* might enjoy every Man the *Inheritance* of his Fathers: And the *Inheritance* be not removed from one Tribe to another. Numb. 36.

This Law did more particularly effect *Zelophehad's* Daughters (upon whose Occasion it was made:) and they were thereby required to marry within the Family of the Tribe of their Father. Whereupon they are said *to be married unto their Father's Brother's Sons*, ver. 11. That is, as it is explained ver. 12. *They were married into the Families* (or as in the Margin, *to some that were of the Families*) of the Sons of *Manasseh*, the Son of *Joseph*. Which takes off the Force of their Argument, who, from hence, would infer the Lawfulness of Marriages between First-Cousins.

The End of the Book of NUMBERS.

THE

T H E
B O O K
O F
D E U T E R O N O M Y :

Which signifies the Second Law, because many of the Laws delivered before, are here repeated. It takes up something more than a Month's Time.

NOW were the *Forty Years* of *Israel's Travels*, in and about the *Wilderness*, well near expired; In which time all the Men, that at several times (but more especially upon the Return of the Spies, who were sent to search the Land, *Numb. 14.*) had murmured, and rebelled against the Lord, and refused to enter the good Land, were *Wasted, Consumed, Cut off, Destroyed and Dead*, (as the Lord had threatned, *ver. 22, 23.*) So that there was not a Man of them left, *Numb. 26. 64.*

Moses therefore considering, that the *present Generation* of the Children of *Israel*, now ready to pass over *Jordan*, to possess the *Promised Land*, were many (if not most of them) such as were sprung up, since the Law was given at *Sinai*, near *Forty Years* before; and being for the most part either born since, or too young then to remember, and understand the Law then given, thought fit to *Repeat the Law to them*: From whence this Book is called *Deuteronomy*; which signifies, a *Second, or Repeated Law*. This being premised and well considered, the Reader cannot reasonably expect any great store of *Historical Remarks* from this Book; which is, for the most part, but a *Repetition*, of what has been before delivered, in some or other of the three next foregoing Books.

It was on the *First Day* of the *Eleventh Month*, in the *Fortieth Year* *Deut. 1.* from the *Israelites Departure* out of *Egypt* (the People being yet in the Plains of *Moab*, by *Jordan*, and near *Jericho*) that he began this *Repetition*; and first briefly related to them the most *memorable Passages*, which had befallen their Fathers in their Travel; The *Gracious Dealings* of the Lord with them; their *Unruliness, Disobedience and Rebellions* against the

Lord, which provoked the Lord to *Displeasure* against them, and brought not only upon them, but by their Means upon him also, that grievous Sentence, *That they should not enter into the Good Land.* Which Account he gave them, in the Four first Chapters of this Book, and repeated in divers other parts thereof, to the intent that these might take warning by the Miscarriages of their Fore-fathers; and avoid those Rocks, upon which they had spilt.

Then repeated he to them the *Decalogue*, and divers other *Laws* and *Precepts* formerly given (tho' not without some Variations) with some Addition of *New Laws*, on divers Subjects, and *Explanations* of the *Old*; Intermingling ever now and then *Exhortations* to *Obedience*, and *Promises* of *Blessings* upon their Faithful Perseverance in the Way of the Lord; and *Comminations*, or *Threatnings*, with *Denunciations* of great and *Terrible Judgments*, if they should forsake the Lord, and transgress his Statutes and Ordinances. All which, with *Rehearsals* sometimes of their Fathers and their *Prevarications*, (filling the Body of this Book, from chap. 4. to chap. 31.) *Moses* not only delivered to the People by word of Mouth; but also writ in a Book: and gave the Book to the *Levites*, which bare the *Ark* of the Covenant of the Lord; with Direction from the Lord, that they should put it into the side of the *Ark*, to be kept there for a Witness against *Israel*, if they should Rebel.

Besides which, *Moses*, by the Lord's Direction, composed and writ a Song (which read in chap. 32.) in which is amply set forth the Goodness and Favour of God to his People; Their Ingratitude and Forgetfulness of God; The Punishments whereby he Corrected them; with Threatnings of greater Punishments, in case they should disobey, and provoke him yet further.

This Song *Moses* recited to the People, and gave Order that they should learn it, and repeat it often: That when, for their Transgressing the Law, many Evils and Troubles should befall them, this Song might be a Witness for God against them.

The People being now almost ready to pass over *Jordan*; and the Lord having formerly told *Moses*, that he should not bring them into the *Promised Land*, because of his Failure at the Water of *Meribah*, Numb. 20. 12. he now bid him get him up into the Mountain *Abarim*, unto Mount *Nebo*, in the Land of *Moab*, over-against *Jericho*, and take a View of the Land of *Canaan*; and then die there, in that Mount, as *Aaron* his Brother died in Mount *Hor*.

This was very hard to *Moses*, as himself shews, Deut. 3. 23, &c. Where he says, *I besought the Lord at that time, Saying, O Lord God, — I pray thee, let me go over, and see the Good Land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly Mountain and Lebanon.* But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes (said he to the People) and would not hear me, but said, *Speak no more unto me of this matter: Let it suffice thee to go up to the Top of the Hill, and look every way, and behold the Land on every side; For thou shalt not go over this Jordan.*

When therefore *Moses* saw, that the Lord would not be prevailed with, to let him go over *Jordan* with *Israel*; bowing in Spirit unto the Will of the Lord, he took a Solemn Farewel (as it were) of the People, in a *Prophetic Blessing* pronounced upon each Tribe, (as *Jacob* had done just before his Death.) And having before, by God's Command, appointed *Joshua* for his Successor, to go before the People, and to lead them into the *Promised Land*, (Laying his Hands upon him, in such a Solemn and Publick Manner, as gave all the People to understand, that after *Moses* his Death, *Joshua* was to be their Leader;) *Moses* went up

to the Top of the Hill, right over-against *Jericbo*; from whence he could take a *Full View* of the Country round about. Deut. 32.

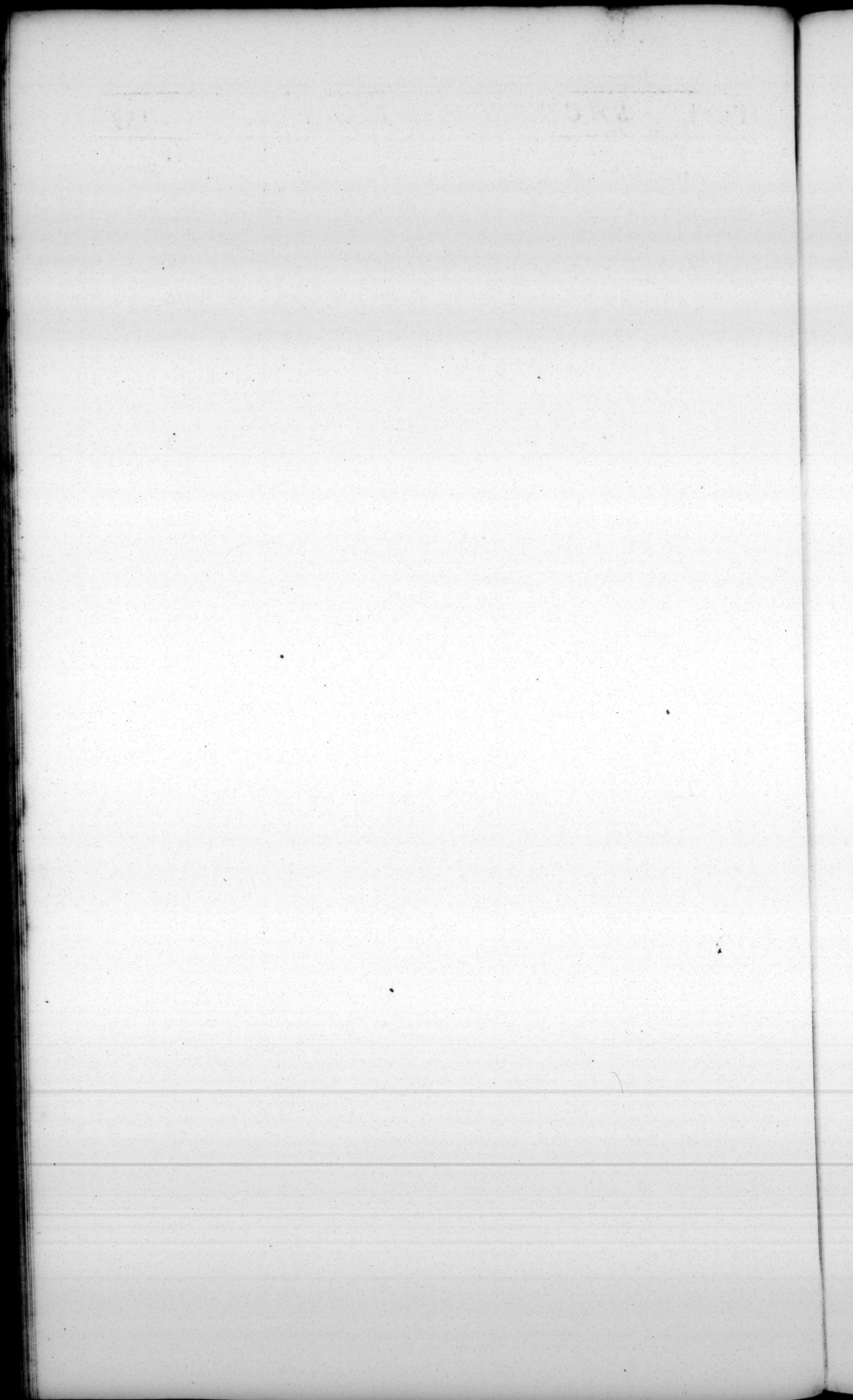
And after the Lord had kindly shewed him the several Parts of the Land, *he Died there* in the Land of *Moab*, according to the Word of the Lord; being an Hundred and Twenty Years of Age: But in so good Health, and full Strength, that neither was his Eye dim, nor his *Natural Force* abated.

Altho' the *Israelites* had so often risen up against *Moses*, and spoken *Contemptibly* of him: Yet the Lord knew, that a *People so addicted to Idolatry* as they were, when they should call to mind the many Great and *Wonderful Works*, which had been wrought for them by him, in *Egypt*, at the *Red Sea*, and in the *Wilderness*, would hardly be restrained from giving *Superstitions*, at least, if not *Idolatrous Adorations* to his *Reliques*, if they should have the Disposal of his Body.

To prevent therefore that Danger, *the Lord vouchsafed to bury Moses himself*, in a Valley in the Land of *Moab*, over-against *Beth-peor*: Yet so that no Man knew where his *Sepulchre* was. And when, (as so many Ages after we learn from the Apostle *Jude*) the Devil (probably to have given the *Israelites* an occasion to Idolize it) would fain have found out *Moses* his Body, *Michael* the Arch-Angel, contending with him, would not suffer it to be discovered.

However, when the Children of *Israel* understood, that *Moses* was dead, they wept, and *Mourned* for him, in the Plains of *Moab*, *Thirty Days*. And altho' he had not a *Publick Monument*, or *Tomb-Stone*; yet this stands as an *Honourable Epitaph* on him, That *Moses* died *the Servant of the Lord*: And *there arose not a Prophet after him in Israel*, like unto him, whom the Lord knew *Face to Face*.

The End of the Book of DEUTRONOMY.



T H E
B O O K
O F
J O S H U A:

Containing an History of about Seventeen Years.

P A R T II.

M O S E S, the Servant of the Lord, being *gone to Rest, Joshua*, which signifies a Saviour, the Son of Nun, (of the Tribe of Ephraim) whom the Lord had filled with the Spirit of Wisdom, *Deut. 34. 9.* stood up, by God's Command, in his place; as Leader, under God, of the Host of Israel.

He was Fifty and Three Years old, when he came out of Egypt; and was now much the eldest Man in the whole Camp. And having been *Prime Minister* unto Moses, for the greatest part of those Forty Years, wherein Israel wandered in the Wilderness, he had both seen the wondrous Works of the Lord; and well understood the Nature, Temper, Disposition and Spirit of that People.

He was also one of the *Twelve Spies*, which were sent to search the Land: And one of the *Two*, that brought a good and true Report of it; and zealously withstood the other *Ten Spies*, that raised an evil and false Report of it. For which his Faithfulness he had the Promise, that he (and none but he, and Caleb, the other Faithful Spie, of all the Men that came out of Egypt) should possess the Good Land, *Deut. 1. 36, 38.*

Into which being now ready to enter, altho' he had received his Commission before, and was (if I may so say) *Installed* into his Office, with very Solemn Ceremonies; (Moses having, at God's Command, presented him, before Eleazer the Priest, and laid his Hand upon him, and put upon him some of the Honour that was upon himself, in the Sight of the whole Congregation, *Numb. 27. 18, &c.*) Yet for his greater Encouragement, the Lord was pleased now to bid him *Arise, and go over Jordan* with the People, telling him that *every Place the Sole of their Feet should tread upon, he had given them*: And assuring him, that

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there should not any Man be able to stand before him, all the Days of his Life. For as he had been with Moses; so he would be with him: He would not fail him, nor forsake him. And therefore bid him Be strong, and of good Courage: For he should divide the Land, for an Inheritance to the People.

Thus encouraged, the First thing Joshua did, was, to send out a couple of Men, to go as Spies to Jericho, and make Observations of the Place, with respect to the Situation and Strength thereof, and the Approaches thereunto; this being the first Place to be Attacked, after they should be past Jordan.

Josh. 2. Having dispatched those Men on that Service, he gave order to the Officers to pass through the Host, and give notice to the People, that within Three Days they should pass over Jordan, to possess the Land which the Lord their God had given them: And that therefore they should provide themselves of Victuals for such a March.

This Direction for Marching is set, in the Text, before the sending the Spies to Jericho. But it seems the Spies were sent before that, and returned to the Camp at Shittim, before they took their March towards Jordan: For the Spies spent longer time in their Search, than was between the Notice given for Marching and the March; which was but Three Days: Whereas they lay hid Three Days in the Mountain, for their Safety, besides the time they spent in Jericho, and in going and returning; which they could not have done, had they not been sent away, before the Order for Marching was given. So that what is delivered in the Second Chapter, should in order of time, come in about the middle of the First Chapter, between the Ninth and Tenth Verses: Being, as Tremellius and Junius note, displaced and transposed by a Figure called Hyperbaton. Let us therefore go along with the Spies, and observe the Success of their Enterprize.

A. M. 2553. When they were got to Jericho, and had entred the City, they went (being Strangers) to a Publick House of Entertainment, which was kept by Rahab, and there they took up their Lodging. Whether she was an Harlot, or no, is uncertain, and controverted: That she was a Victualler, or Hostess, is unquestionable.

But they being seen go in thither, and Information given to the King of Jericho, that some Men of the Children of Israel were come thither by Night (rather than to Night) to search the Countrey; the King sent to Rahab to bring them forth.

It may be supposed that Rahab had gotten notice of this, before the King's Messenger came to her: For she had brought the Two Spies up to the Roof of her House, and hidden them there, under the Stalks of Flax, which she had spread upon the Roof.

Where Note, that the Roofs of Houses were then built Flat, so that they could both walk upon them, and set their Goods there; having Battlements round them, to secure them from falling off, Deut. 22. 8. And such a Roof it was, that David afterwards walked upon, when he unhappily espied Bath-sheba bathing her self, 2 Sam. 11. 2.

Rahab, having hid the Men, put off the King's Messengers with a feigned Story. For acknowledging that there did indeed some Men come to her; but pretending that she did not know what they were, nor whence they came: she told them that, when it grew dark, and before the Gates were shut, they went out, but she knew not whither. And the more to prevent Suspicion, she advised them to pursue after them quickly: For without question, she told them, they might overtake them. Some thereupon (being let out of the City, and the Gate, for fear of a Surprise, shut after them) taking the way that led towards Jordan, pursued as far as unto the Fords.

When

When therefore she had thus sent away the Pursuers, she going up unto the Men whom she had hid, said unto them, *I know the Lord Josh. 1, 2. hath given you the Land, and that your Terror is fallen upon us, and that all the Inhabitants of the Land faint because of you. For we have heard, how the Lord dried up the Water of the Red-Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt: And how ye utterly destroyed Sihon, and Og, the Two Kings of the Amorites, on the other Side Jordan. And as soon as we heard these things, our Hearts did melt; neither did there any more Courage remain in any Man, because of you: For the Lord your God, he is God in Heaven above, and in the Earth beneath. Now therefore, said she, I pray you, Swear unto me by the Lord, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my Father's House; and will save alive my Father and my Mother, my Brethren and my Sisters, and all that they have: And deliver our Lives from Death; and give me thereof a true Sign.*

Our Life for yours (for thee and thy Relations) said they to her; that when the Lord shall have given us the Land, we will deal kindly and truly with thee (and thine.)

Thereupon she let them down by a Cord thro' the Window: For her House standing upon the Town-wall, she dwelt upon the Wall. And when they were down, she said unto them, *Get ye to the Mountain, lest the Pursuers meet you; and hide your selves there three days, until they be returned: And afterwards ye may go your way.*

But before the Men would go, they would settle the matter more thoroughly with her; that there might be no misunderstanding between them. Therefore they bid her be sure to tie a *Scarlet Thread* or Line in the Window, through which she had let them down, and bring her Father, Mother, Brethren, and all her Father's Household, home unto her, and let them be careful to keep within Doors, when the *Israelitish* Army should enter the Town. For if the Line were not in the Window, for them to know the House by: Or, if any of the Family should be found abroad in the Street, his Blood (if he were slain) should be upon *his own* Head; and they would be guiltless. But if any should be slain, that was in the House with her, his Blood should be *on their* Head: Always provided, that she did not discover their Enterprize. When they had spoken, she said, *Amen*, to the Terms; and sent them away: And they escaping into the Mountain, tarried there Three Days, till the Pursuers who had sought them throughout all the way, not finding them, were returned. And then these Two Men also, descending from the Mountain, passed over *Jordan*: And returning to *Joshua*, told him what had befallen them, and how narrowly they had escaped. Adding withal, *Truly the Lord hath delivered into our Hands all the Land: For even all the Inhabitants of the Countrey do faint because of us.*

This so good and cheering News made *Joshua* hasten. Wherefore, having put the *Reubenites*, *Gadites*, and half Tribe of *Manasseh*, in mind of the Compact made between *Moses* and them, that they (leaving their Wives, Children and Cattel on this side *Jordan*) should go over armed (to wit, the Prime of their Men of War) before their Brethren, to help to subdue their Enemies, and place them in their Possessions: Which they acknowledging themselves bound to do, declared their readiness to go; with a Resolution to be subject to him their General, as they had been to *Moses*; promising in all things to obey his Commands, under the Penalty of *Martial Discipline*; and therefore encouraged him to be strong and courageous. As soon as the Three Days were past, which he had allowed the Army to prepare their Necessaries in,

- Josh. 2.* in, the Officers going through the Host, commanded the People, that when they should see the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord their God, and the *Priests*, the *Levites* bearing it, then they should remove from their Place, and go after it; that they might know the way by which they were to go, because they had never passed that way before. And
- Josh. 3.* that a due and decent Order might be observed in their March, Direction was given that they should leave a space of about *Two Thousand Cubits*, commonly taken for a Mile, between the Ark and them.

A. M. Early therefore in the Morning, on the Ninth Day of the First
2553. Month, *Joshua* got up, and having exhorted the People to Sanctifie themselves, because the Lord would next Day do Wonders amongst them; he bid the *Priests* take up the Ark of the Covenant, and pass along with it before the People: Which they doing, he and all the Children of *Israel* removing from *Shittim*, came to *Jordan*, and lodged there before they passed over.

Being ready next Morning to pass over *Jordan*, and the Lord having told *Joshua*, that that Day he would begin to Magnifie him in the Sight of all *Israel*; so that they should know, that as he had been with *Moses*, so he would be with him: And having also directed him to bid the *Priests*, who were to bear the Ark of the Covenant, to stand still in *Jordan*, when they were come to the Brink of the Water; *Joshua* thereupon calling the Children of *Israel* to hear the Words of the Lord their God, told them, They should hereby know that the living God was among them, and that he would drive out the Nations from before them; For the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of all the Earth passing over before them into *Jordan*, as soon as the Soles of the Feet of the *Priests*, that bare the Ark, should rest in the Waters of *Jordan*, the Waters of *Jordan* should be cut off from the Waters that came down from above; and should stand upon an Heap. And exactly so it came to pass; So that the *Priests*, that bare the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, stood firm on dry Ground in the midst of *Jordan*. And this was that Wonder, wherewith the Lord had promised *Joshua*, that he would magnifie him; as he had before Magnified *Moses*, by dividing the Waters at the Red Sea.

- Josh. 4.* *Joshua* having before, by the Lord's Command, selected out Twelve Men, one of each Tribe; so soon as all the People were clean passed over *Jordan*, he called these Twelve Men to him, and bid them pass on, before the Ark of the Lord, into the midst of *Jordan*; and there in the Place where the *Priests* Feet stood firm on Dry Ground, take up Twelve Stones, every Man of them a Stone upon his Shoulder, according to the Number of the Tribes of the Children of *Israel*, and carry them to the Place where they should lodge that Night; which accordingly they did. Besides which, *Joshua* set up Twelve other Stones in *Jordan*, as a Memorial of this great Miracle, in the Place where the Feet of the *Priests* stood, that did bear the Ark of the Covenant.

Now when all the People were clean passed over *Jordan* (about Forty Thousand of the Children of *Reuben*, *Gad*, and the half Tribe of *Manasseh*, ready armed for War, leading the Van) the Lord bid *Joshua* command the *Priests* that bare the Ark of the Testimony, to come up with the Ark out of *Jordan*. For the *Priests* which bare the Ark stood in the midst of *Jordan*, until all the People were passed over, and every thing was finished that the Lord had commanded (relating to their Passage.) And as soon as the *Priests*, that bare the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, were come up out of the midst of *Jordan*, the Waters of *Jordan* returned to their Place, and flowed over all his Banks, as they were wont to do before: For *Jordan*, used to overflow its Banks in the time of Harvest.

Israel

Israel having thus passed over *Jordan*, on the Tenth Day of the First Month, encamped in a Place called afterwards *Gilgal*, which *Josh. 4.* was in the East-Border of *Jericho*; And there did *Joshua* pitch those Twelve Stones, which the Twelve Men had brought out of *Jordan*: To stand there, as a Monument to Posterity; that when the Offspring of *Israel*, in times to come, should ask their Parents the Reason thereof, they might thence take occasion to inform them, that the Lord their God had dried up the Waters of *Jordan*, and caused his *Israel* to come over that River on dry Land, as he had formerly dried up the Red Sea for their Passage out of *Egypt*; and that all the People of the Earth might know, that the Hand of the Lord is mighty.

So great a Miracle as this was, To cause a deep and rapid Stream to divide it self, and the Waters forgetting their Natural Fluidity, to stand on Heaps, while more than a Million of People, perhaps near Two Millions (for there were more than Six Hundred Thousand Fighting Men, besides the Tribe of *Levi*, and the Women and Children of all the Tribes) passed thro' the Channel dry-foot, with all their Cattel and Carriages: And this so publicly wrought, in the Sight of the Nations, might well strike the Inhabitants of the Land with Astonishment and Terror; and so it did. For it's said, When all the Kings of the Amorites, which were on the side of *Jordan*, Westward, and all the Kings of the Canaanites, which were by the Sea, heard that the Lord had dried up the Waters of *Jordan*, from before the Children of *Israel* until they were passed over, their Heart melted; neither was there Spirit in them any more, because of the Children of *Israel*.

Herein the Wisdom of God was greatly manifest, in striking the Nations with such a Fear, that they should not dare to make Head against *Israel* upon their passing over *Jordan*. For the Lord had now a Work to do upon his People, which would render them for a while unable, not only to assail their Enemies, but even to defend themselves. For during their Travel in the Wilderness, Circumcision had been omitted; whether thro' a Neglect of the Ordinance: Or, that being (or expecting to be) always upon the March, they thought it unsafe to *Josh. 5.* expose them to the Hardship of it; and all they who were Men, when they came out of *Egypt*, and had been Circumcised there, being Dead, (*Joshua* and *Caleb* only excepted) most of the present Generation being such, as had been born within the Forty Years of their Wilderness-travel, had not been circumcised hitherto.

The Lord therefore, now that they were passed over *Jordan*, and were ready to take Possession of the promised Land, commanded *Joshua* to make him sharp Knives, and circumcise the Sons of *Israel* again (that is, all those of them, that had not been circumcised already in their Infancy in *Egypt*) which *Joshua* caused to be done. And when it was done, the Lord said unto *Joshua*, This Day have I rolled away the Reproach of *Egypt* from off you. And from hence the Name of the Place where this was done, was then called *Gilgal*, which signifies Rolling. So that the using of that Name before, both in *Joshua* 4. 19. and in *Deut.* 11. 30. was by Anticipation.

In this Place they encamped, and staid till they were whole of the Wounds their Circumcision had made. And here they kept the Passover, on the fourteenth Day of the first Month at Even in the Plains of *Jericho*.

And now they began to enjoy the good of the Land: For on the next Day after the Passover, they eat of the old Corn of the Land, and on the Morrow, the Manna ceased; so that they eat thenceforward of the Fruit of the Land of *Canaan*.

Josh. 6.

Now was *Jericho* straitly shut up, for fear of the Children of *Israel*; None were suffered to go out or in: So that, it seems, they resolved to maintain the Place, and bear a Siege. *Joshua* therefore himself drew near to *Jericho*: Probably, to observe where he might best plant his Batteries, and make his Approaches against the City.

And as he stood there, looking up, he saw a Man standing over against him with his Sword drawn in his Hand.

Joshua, being a Man of high Courage, went up to him; and boldly asked him, *Art thou for us, or for our Adversaries?* He answered, *Nay, (not for your Adversaries:) But as Captain of the Host of the Lord am I now come.* At that Word *Joshua* fell on his Face, and worshipped, saying, What faith my Lord unto his Servant?

By this Act of Adoration, and Title of Lord, performed and given by *Joshua*, and accepted by the other, it is evident, that this Captain of the Lord's Host was *Christ*, the Son of God; who was pleased in this manner, to appear to *Joshua*, both to encourage and direct him. Wherefore, having first bid *Joshua* (as *Moses* was bid at the Burning-Bush, *Exod.* 3.5.) *Loose thy Shoe from off thy Foot; because the Place, whereon he stood, was Holy;* and *Joshua* having obeyed, the Lord said to *Joshua*, *See, I have given into thine Hand Jericho, and the King thereof, with the mighty Men of Valour;* and then instructed him, in what manner he should beleaguer the City, and how he should take it, *Chap.* 6. 2, &c.

Pursuant to which Direction, *Joshua*, drawing out the Men of War, set them foremost; and next to them Seven Priests, blowing Seven Trumpets made of Rams-horns: Then followed the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord; and after that, the Rere-ward of the Army.

In this order he commanded them to march round the City, once every Day, for Six Days together, the Seven Priests sounding their Trumpets as they went, and to return to the Camp at Night. But he gave them a strict Charge, that none of the People should shout, nor speak a Word, as they marched, until he should give them the Signal to shout: And then they should shout stoutly.

A. M.
2553.

Having compassed the City thus Six Days one after another; on the Seventh Day, setting out betimes (about the Dawning of the Day) they compassed the City Seven times that Day (whence we may conclude the Place could not be of any great Bigness;) and at the Seventh time, when the Priests blew with the Trumpets, *Joshua* said to the People, *Shout! for the Lord hath given you the City.* With that the People gave a great Shout; and thereupon the Wall of the City fell down flat: So that the Army marched directly up into the City, and took it; putting all to the Sword, both Man and Beast, Old and Young.

Only *Rahab*, and those in her House, were saved. For *Joshua* had given Charge before hand to the Two Spies (which she had formerly hid) to take care, and make it their Business (when the Town should be taken) to go to her House; and bring out her, and all that she had, in discharge of their Oath. Which accordingly they did, and left her with all her Kindred and Substance, safe without the Camp of *Israel*: For being Aliens, or Heathens, they were not permitted to come within the Camp, until they were Profelyted, or at least legally purified.

Then setting the City on Fire, they destroyed all that was therein, (except the Silver and Gold, and Vessels of Brass and of Iron; such things as would bear the Fire; which were put into the Treasury of the House of the Lord. And *Joshua* gave forth a Prophetick Imprecation upon him that should undertake to build that City again, viz. That he

he should lay the Foundation thereof in his First-born, and set up the Gates thereof in his youngest Son: (that is, that it should be the Ruin of his Family:) Which afterwards befel to Hiel the Bethelite; who in the Days of Ahab King of Israel, (above Five Hundred Years after) began it with the loss of his eldest Son Abiram, and finished it with the Loss of Segub his youngest Son, 1 Kings 16. 34.

Joshua had told the People, before they had taken the City, that it, and all that was therein, should be devoted to Destruction, as an Accursed thing (except the Silver, Gold, Bras and Iron; which should be Consecrated to the Lord:) And therefore he warned them, that they should by no means meddle with the Accursed Thing, lest they should make themselves Accursed, by taking any thing of it, and so trouble the Camp of Israel, by bringing a Curse upon it.

But notwithstanding this strict Charge, one of the Tribes of Judah, whose Name was Achan, (which signifies Troubling) took of the Accursed thing; as well of that which was devoted to Destruction, as of that which was Consecrated to the Lord. And this brought so great a Trouble and Curse upon Israel, that when Joshua having sent some to view Ai (a little City beside Beth-aven, on the East-side of Bethel) and finding it was not Populous, nor well defended, ordered about Three Thousand Men to go up and take it, they were Repulsed, and beaten, and fled before the Men of Ai, with the Loss of some of the Party, and the Discouragement of the whole Army.

This Disaster wonderfully afflicted Joshua: So that rending his Clothes, and falling to the Earth upon his Face, before the Ark of the Lord, he lay there until the Evening; both he, and the Elders of Israel, with Dust upon their Heads. (Tokens of extream Sorrow and Humiliation; See 1 Sam. 4. 12. and Nehem. 9. 1.) And being wholly ignorant of the Offence, which had provoked the Lord thus to leave his People, he poured forth his Complaint, in this humble Expostulation with God.

Alas! O Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this People over Jordan, to deliver us into the Hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan. O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their Backs before their Enemies! For the Canaanites, and all the Inhabitants of the Land will hear of it, and will environ us round, and cut off our Name from the Earth; and what wilt thou do unto thy great Name?

But the Lord soon roused up Joshua, telling him Israel had sinned, and had transgressed his Covenant: and that was the Reason why they could not stand before their Enemies. For they had taken of the Accursed thing, viz. of that which was Devoted to Destruction; and had stolen also some of those things that were Devoted to the Lord: And Dissembled, making as if they had brought it all into the Treasury of the Lord; when as they had hid some of it, to keep it for their own use. Therefore the Lord bid Joshua, Up, and bestir himself, to clear the Camp of this Accursed Thing: For he would not be with them any more, Except they destroyed the Accursed from amongst them.

From this Instance it is observable, That altho' it was but one Man that was actually Guilty: yet the Guilt was charged upon the whole People; and they felt the Effects thereof, until they convicted, and punished the Offender. Therefore the Lord bid Joshua proclaim among the People, *There is an Accursed Thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: Thou canst not stand before thine Enemies, until ye take away the Accursed thing from among you.* Which that they might do, the Lord directed Joshua how he should find the Offender out; and how he should be punished, when found and Convicted.

Josh. 7. *Joshua* therefore early next Morning, brought all the Tribes before the Lord, and the Lot being cast upon the Tribes, the Tribe of *Judah* was taken. Then going on by Lot, from Tribe to Family, from Family to Household, and so to particular Persons, the Lot fell at last upon *Achan*, Whereupon *Joshua* said to *Achan*, *My Son, Give, I pray thee, Glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make Confession unto him, and tell me now what thou hast done: Hide it not from me.*

Herein we have an excellent Example of a good Judge, examining the greatest Criminal by Gentleness; to draw him to a Penitent Confession; rather than by Rigour, Threats, or Torture, to force from him a desperate Discovery.

This gentle dealing had an answerable Effect: for *Achan* thereupon thus made Confession to *Joshua*. *Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, said he, and thus and thus have I done. That is, When I saw among the Spoils a goodly Babylonish Garment (which was of those things that were devoted to be destroyed) and Two hundred Shekels of Silver, with a Wedge of Gold (in the form of a Tongue, and therefore in the Margin called a Tongue of Gold) of Fifty Shekels weight, (which were of the things Consecrated to the Lord) then I coveted them, and took them, and hid them in the Earth, in the midst of my Tent.*

Joshua thereupon, for his more evident Conviction, sent Messengers to search *Achan's* Tent: who finding the things hid, as he had confessed, brought them to *Joshua* and the Children of *Israel*, and laid them out before the Lord.

Whereupon *Achan* being duly Convicted, for both by the Notoriety of the Fact, and his own Confession; *Joshua*, and all *Israel* took him, with the Silver, and the Garment, and the Wedge of Gold (as Evidences of his Guilt) and with him his Sons and his Daughters, as Accessories, and all his Cattel also, together with his Tent, and all that he had, and brought them into a Valley which from him thenceforth took the Name of the Valley of *Achor*; (for so was he called, and also *Achar*, 1 *Chron.* 2. 7.) where he and his Family being first stoned to Death, were burned with Fire: and a great heap of Stones was raised over him, for a Memorial and Warning to others.

By this Execution the Anger of the Lord being appeased, he encouraged *Joshua* to go on in his Work: bidding him, *Not fear nor be dismayed*; but take all the Men of War with him, and go up against *Ai*. And assuring him, that he had given into his Hand the King of *Ai* and his People, and his City, and Land; he told him, he should do to *Ai*, and her King, as he had done to *Jericho* and her King; only, for the Encouragement of the Soldiers, he allowed them to take the Spoil of the City, and the Cattel, for a Prey to themselves. And withal God directed *Joshua* to lay an Ambush for the City behind it. Which is the first Ambush we read of in Story.

Joshua therefore, thus encouraged and instructed, chose out Thirty Thousand mighty Men of Valour, and sent them away by Night, with order to plant themselves behind the City, and as near to it as they could, without Danger of being discovered. And to be all ready in Arms; that when he, with the Army, should have provoked the Men of *Ai* to come forth to the Battel, and by a feigned Flight should have drawn them off from the City: these upon a Signal to be given, by holding up a Spear with an Ensign or Banner upon it, should run into the City, and set it on Fire.

So well succeeded this Stratagem, that thereby *Ai* was taken without a stroke: For *Joshua* when he understood his Ambush was safely laid, drew

drew up his Army before the City, on the North-side thereof, having a Valley between it and him: where having pitcht all Day, in the Sight *Josb. 8.* of the City, he led down his Army at Night into the midst of the Valley, to tempt the Enemy, by the Advantage of the Place, to make a Sally upon him.

This Bait took the King of *Ai*: who not willing to slip such an Advantage, got up betimes in the Morning, and drew out all his Forces, to give *Israel* Battel. They at the first Charge putting on an Appearance of Fear, turn'd their Backs, and fled. Which so animated the Men of *Ai*, that calling out all their Citizens to their Assistance, they pursued after *Joshua*, till they were drawn away from the City, which in their haste, and Confidence of Victory, they had left open, and without a Man in it, to defend or guard it. Then did the Lord direct *Joshua*, to give the Signal to his Men in Ambush: which he had no sooner done, but they immediately rising out of their Place, ran into the City; and with all speed set it on Fire.

When *Joshua*, by the Smoke, perceived his Men had possessed themselves of the Town, rallying his Forces, he turned upon the Men of *Ai*: who looking behind them, and seeing their City in a Flame, were so dis-spirited, that they had no Power either to fight or to fly. Mean while the Ambushers, who had possessed themselves of the City, issuing out upon them in the Rear, the Men of *Ai* being enclosed in the midst of *Israel*, were smitten down on every side, so that not one of them escaped.

The Field thus cleared, the Army marched to *Ai*, and smote it (that is, the Women and Children that were in it) with the Edge of the Sword; so that all the Inhabitants of *Ai* fell that Day, being Twelve Thousand Men and Women. For *Joshua* drew not back his Hand, wherewith he had stretched out the Spear, until all the Inhabitants of *Ai* were utterly destroyed. The Cattel and Spoil of the City, *Israel* took for a Prey unto themselves: and then burning the City down to the Ground, they made it an heap of Rubbish. A. M.
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The King of *Ai*, taken Prisoner in the Field, was brought to *Joshua*, and by his Command hanged on a Tree, till Evening. But as soon as the Sun was gone down, he gave Order that they should take his Carcass down from the Tree (in observance of the Law, *Deut. 21. 22, 23.*) and bury it under a great Heap of Stones, at the Entrance of the Gate of the City.

The Victory thus, by God's Direction, obtained, *Joshua*, in Token of Thankfulness, built an Altar to the Lord God of *Israel* in Mount *Ebal* (according as the Lord had by *Moses* commanded, *Deut. 27. 5.*) and thereon he offered Burnt-offerings and Sacrificed Peace-offerings. Which done, he not only read unto the People, both *Israelites* and Strangers, the Words of the Law given by *Moses*: but wrote also, upon great Stones, (plaistered over with Plaister) a Copy of the Law which *Moses* had written; according as *Moses* had directed, *Deut. 27. 2, 3, 4.* So that it is not difficult to apprehend, how divers of the *Gentile Nations* came to imitate the *Jews*, in many of their Religious Observances and Rites, when the *Mosaick Law* was so publicly exposed to the Sight of all.

The Report of the Taking, Sacking and Burning these Two Cities, *Jericho* and *Ai*, and putting all the Inhabitants to the Sword, alarm'd all the Kings which were on that side *Jordan*, viz. The *Hittite*, *Amorite*, *Canaanite*, *Perizzite*, *Hivite* and *Jebusite*; and made them think it was high time for them to Confederates among themselves, and enter a Common League for their mutual Defence.

Josh. 9. But while they were gathering their Forces together, the Inhabitants of Gibeon who by Nation were of the *Hivites*, ver. 7. considering that *Policy would go beyond Strength*, resolved to try if they could save themselves by a *Wile*.

They therefore sent out certain of their Men, who should fain themselves to be *Ambassadors*, come from a far Country, to treat for Peace, and enter a League with *Israel*. And the better to persuade that they had come a great way, they took with them upon their Asses *Old Sacks* and *old Wine-Bottles*, that were torn and tied together, and *Old Clouted Shoes* upon their Feet, and all their Garments old, and Bread that was grown *Dry and Mouldy*.

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Thus accoutred, they came to the *Israelitish* Camp at *Gilgal*, and presenting themselves before *Joshua*, told him, They were come from a far Country, desirous to enter a League with the People of *Israel*.

The Men of *Israel*, somewhat wary, but not enough, answered, *Peradventure ye dwell among us* (and so possess part of that Land, which God hath given us :) *and how then shall we make a League with you?* And *Joshua* downright asked them, *Who are ye? And from whence come ye?* They cunningly, but falsely, replied, *We thy Servants are come from a far County, because of the Name of the Lord thy God: For we have heard the Fame of him; All that he did in Egypt, and all that he did to Sihon and Og, the Two Kings of the Amorites. Wherefore our Elders, and all the Inhabitants of our Country, bid us take Victuals with us for the Journey, and go to meet you, and say unto you, We are your Servants: therefore now make ye a League with us.* Then shewing their *Mouldy Bread*, their *Torn Bottles*, their *Old Cloaths* and *Clouted Shoes*, they assured them that they took the Bread *Hot out of their Houses*, when they came from home; that their Bottles were then *New*, and that their Garments and Shoes were worn old, by reason of the Length of their Journey.

The *Israelites* had a sure way, to have known the certain Truth of this Matter: for they had the *Unerring Oracle*, the *Urim* and the *Thummim* amongst them. But neglecting to ask Counsel at the Mouth of the Lord, they suffered themselves to be beguiled, by the *Seeming Simplicity* of the *Subtil Gibeonites*. And the Lord *Neglecting them*, for their neglect of him, suffered them to believe a Lie, and be deceived by the Deceiver. So that the Men of *Israel*, giving a *Credulous Ear* to the *Gibeonites* fair Story, sufficiently (as they thought) confirmed, by what their own Eyes saw, received them into a League; *Joshua* making Peace with them, to let them live, and the Princes of the Congregation Swearing to observe the League.

But within Three Days after this *Hasty League* was made, the *Israelites* came to understand, that these *New Allies* of theirs, whom they took to have come from some *Very remote* Country, were indeed but their *Neighbours*, and dwelt among them, inhabiting a part of that Land which God had given *Israel* to possess. And so near Neighbours they were, that in *Three Days* March, *Israel* came to their Cities; and fain would the Army have fallen on them. But inasmuch as the Princes of the Congregation had sworn unto them, by the Name of the Lord God of *Israel*, to observe the Peace and League, which *Joshua* and they had made with them, the Army was not suffered to smite them.

Yet the *Soldiers*, not pleased that they were deprived of so fair a *Prize*, as the Rich Cities of the *Gibeonites* would have yielded them, could not forbear *Murmuring* against the *Princes*. Which when the Princes perceived, they endeavoured to pacify them; First, by letting them know the

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the Necessity they were now under of keeping their Oath with them, lest they should incur the Wrath of God, if they brake it. Next, that the League extending only to the saving of the *Gibeonites* Lives; not the exempting them from Tribute or Service, they might yet reap considerable *Advantages* by them, if they were made *Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water*, unto all the Congregation. Josh. 9.

This being approved, *Joshua* calling for the *Gibeonites*, expostulated the Matter with them thus, *Wherefore have ye beguiled us, pretending ye lived very far from us, when ye dwell among us?* They, in excuse, Answer, *Because it was certainly told thy Servants, how that the Lord thy God commanded Moses to give you all the Land, and to destroy all the Inhabitants of the Land from before you: therefore we, being sore afraid of our Lives because of you, have done this thing to save our Lives.*

But tho' by this *Trick*, they did save their Lives: yet did not this *Shift* excuse them, from being condemned to *Perpetual Bondage*. For *Joshua* denounced this Sentence against them, *Now therefore ye are Cursed; and there shall none of you be freed from being Bond-men, even Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water, for the House of my God.* They, glad to escape so, replied, *Behold we are in thy Hand, (at thy Mercy) do to us what seemeth good and right unto thee.*

Thus *Joshua*, having delivered them from the Children of *Israel*, that they slew them not, subjected them, and their Posterity, to this Service; that they should cut Wood, and draw Water for the Congregation, and for the Altar of the Lord, in the Place which he should chuse. And from their being thus given, or dedicated to this Service, their Posterity, after the Building of the Temple, were called *Nethinims*, (that is, given) in 1 *Chron.* 9. 2. and elsewhere often.

But tho' the *Gibeonites* had, by their Policy, redeemed their Lives, with the Loss of their Liberties, from the Sword of *Israel*: Yet had they a *New Reckoning* to make, with their *Old Neighbours*, the *Amorites*. Who so ill resented their *Abandoning the Common Cause and Interest*; and making a *private League* for themselves only with *Israel*, whom they accounted (and not without cause) their *Common Enemy*, that they resolved to take Revenge of them. And in order thereunto *Adonizedek* King of *Jebus*, (which afterwards, in King *David's* time was called *Jerusalem*) inviting Four other Neighbouring Kings to join with him; they all went up with their united Forces, and encamped before *Gibeon*, to make War against it. Josh. 10.

Tho' *Gibeon* was a great City, equal to one of the Royal Cities, and well manned; yet did not the *Gibeonites* think fit to rely upon their own Strength: but forthwith dispatched their *Agents* to *Joshua's* Camp at *Gilgal*, to acquaint him, that all the Kings of the *Amorites*, that dwelt in the Mountains, were gathered together against them; and to entreat him to come up with all speed to their Relief.

Joshua, having made a *League* with the *Gibeonites*, and made them *Vassals to Israel*, held himself obliged, both in *Justice* and *Interest*, to defend them. To which also the Lord encouraged him; bidding him, *Not fear the Amorite Army*: for he had delivered them into his hand, and they should not be able to withstand him.

Arising therefore from *Gilgal*, with all his Men of War, and marching all Night, he came suddenly upon them: and the Lord discomfited them before *Israel*, and slew them with a great Slaughter; and put the rest to flight. And as they fled, the Lord cast down great Stones from Heaven upon them: So that more of them died by the Hailstones, than by the Sword.

Josh. 10. The *Five Kings*, escaping the Hailstones, betook themselves in their Flight to a *Cave*, at a Place called *Makkedah*; and there hid themselves. Of which, Intelligence being given to *Joshua*, he gave order that great Stones should be rolled upon the Entrance of the Cave, and a Guard of Men set by it, to keep them in, till the Pursuit was over: charging his Men not to stay, on that occasion; but to follow the Chase, and do Execution upon the Enemies, before they got into their Fenced Cities.

And that they might not want time to compleat the Victory, and avenge themselves fully on their Enemies; *Joshua* first addressing himself to the Lord by Prayer, and receiving Authority from God, commanded the Sun, in the Sight of *Israel*, saying, *Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou Moon in the Valley of Ajalon.* Whereupon the Sun stood still in the midst of Heaven, and halted not to go down about a whole Day: and the Moon also staid her Course, until *Israel* had avenged themselves upon their Enemies.

This was a long Day indeed, and there was no Day like that before it, or after it, that the Lord hearkned to the Voice of a Man, so as thereupon to stop the Planets in their Courses. But *the Lord fought for Israel.*

Now after that *Israel* was returned from the Chase, having slain all the Enemies, that could not get into the Fenced Cities; *Joshua* gave order to open the Mouth of the Cave, and bring out to him the Five Kings, who had hid themselves. Which being done, he called the Captains of his Men of War, in the Sight of all the Army, and bid them set their Feet upon the Necks of those Kings: And they did so. Then said he unto them, *Fear not, nor be dismayed; but be strong, and of good Courage: For thus shall the Lord do unto all your Enemies against whom you fight.* By which Act, he both animated the Soldiers; and exhibited a Type of the compleat Victory, which God had promised to crown them with, who fight valiantly under his Banner, in the Spiritual Warfare, against the grand Tyrant, and Adversary of the Soul, Satan.

After he had thus Triumphed over them, he smote the Five Kings, and slew them; and caused them to be hanged on five several Trees, until the Evening: but then he ordered them to be taken down, and cast into the Cave, in which they had hid themselves: so making their designed Sanctuary, their Sepulchre.

Thus God, who sometimes brings Good out of Evil, took occasion from that Ill-grounded League, which *Joshua* had made with the Gibeonites, to forward his own Work, and hasten the Destruction of his, and his People's Enemies. For by that means he destroyed Five Kings of the Amorites, with most of their People, in one Day; which otherwise would probably have cost *Israel* much longer time and labour.

The Victory thus obtained in the Field, *Joshua* marched against the Cities. First to *Makkedah*; then to *Libnah*; thence to *Lachish*: where also he smote the King of Gezar, and his People, who came up to help *Lachish*. From *Lachish* he passed on to *Eglon*; from *Eglon* to *Hebron*; and from *Hebron* he returned to *Deber*. All which Places he took by Storm; and put the Inhabitants, both Kings, and People, Men, Women and Children, to the Sword: destroying them with an utter Destruction, according as the Lord had commanded, *Deut. 20. 16, 17.* And having performed such great Exploits, and conquered so many Kings and their Lands in one Expedition, through the Assistance of the God of *Israel*, who fought for *Israel*, *Joshua* returned, with his Victorious Army, to his Camp at *Gilgal*. All

All these great *Atchievements* are, by some *Chronologers*, reckoned to have been performed in the first Year of *Joshua's* Government: and our industrious Country-man, *Ri. Blome*, places them all in the year of the World, 2553. But with his Favour, I should rather think they extended into, if they did not wholly take up the Year, 2554. But to proceed.

When *Jabin* King of *Hazor* heard of *Israel's* great *Successes*, he *Josh. 11.* thought it was in vain for the Princes of *Canaan* to encounter singly, or with small Forces, so Puissant and Victorious an Army. Therefore he sent to *Jobab* King of *Madon*, and to the King of *Shimron*, and to the King of *Achshaph*, and to the Kings that were on the North of the Mountains, and of the Plains, South of *Cinneroth*, and in the Valley, and in the Borders of *Dor*, or the West: And to the *Canaanite* on the East and on the West, and to the *Amorite*, and the *Hittite*, and the *Perizite*, and the *Jebusite* in the Mountains, and the *Hivite* under *Hermion*, in the Land of *Mispeh*: Inviting them all to enter into a *Confederate League*, and with all their united Forces to fall upon *Israel*.

Here was like to be work enough for *Joshua*, at the next Campaign, for all these Kings, with their several Hosts (so great in number, that they are Hyperbolically said to be even as the Sand upon the Sea-shore for Multitude, with Horses and Chariots very many) went out, and pitched their Camp together, at the Waters of *Merom*, to bid Battel to *Israel*.

But when the Lord saw their *Pride* and *Presumption*, he to encourage *Joshua*, bid him, *Not to be afraid of them: for to morrow*, (said he) *about this time, will I deliver them up all slain before Israel; and thou shalt hough* (that is, cut the Hamstrings, or Sinews of) *their Horses, and burn their Chariots with Fire*.

Accordingly *Joshua*, taking the Field, with all his Men of War, marched directly towards the Enemies, and fell suddenly on them, and the Lord delivered them into the Hand of *Israel*, who smote them, and put them to Flight, and in the Pursuit, slew them, till they left none remaining.

Then having houghed their *Horses*, and burnt their Chariots, as the Lord had bidden him; *Joshua* turning back, took *Hazor*, and all the Cities of those other Kings, and put the Kings and People of every City to the Sword, not sparing any, but utterly destroying them.

And because *Hazor* had before time been the Head of all these Kingdoms, and *Jabin* her King was the Head of this Confederacy, he caused that City to be set on Fire, and burnt down: but all the other Cities, whose Inhabitants he had slain, he left standing, and gave the Spoil thereof, and the Cattel, for a Prey to the Children of *Israel*.

Thus did *Joshua*, by degrees, recover all the Land of *Canaan*; subduing the Nations and People that possessed it, and slaying all their Kings, no less than *One and Thirty* in Number, with the *Anakims*, or Giants, of which he left none remaining, save in *Gaza*, *Gath*, and *Ashdod*. *Josh. 12.*

But this Work may be allowed to have taken up some time: and indeed, in *Josh. 11. 18.* it is said, *Joshua made War a long time with all those Kings*; and from *Caleb's* Words, in *Chap. 14. 6. and 10.* where he says, *It is Five and Forty Years* since he was sent to spie the Land, it may be fairly gathered, that between *Six* and *Seven* Years were spent in this War.

The other Things which were mentioned afterwards in this Book, may be supposed to have taken up the rest of *Joshua's* time. As namely, the dividing the Land, beyond *Jordan*, among the Nine Tribes, and

From Chap. 14. and half Tribe, by Lot. (For the Tribes of *Reuben*, and *Gad*, and half the Tribe of *Manasseh*, had their Portions assigned, and given them, on the other side of *Jordan*, by *Moses* himself, *Numb.* 32. Which is here repeated, and their Lots described,) Then the setting up the *Ta-bernacle at Shiloh*, Chap. 18. 1. The appointing Cities of Refuge for the Man-slayer, Ch. 20. The setting out Cities for the Levites, some out of each Tribe, Chap. 21. With other Things of more particular Con-
 19. Josph. 13. 20, 21. cernment.

The Tribes thus settled in their several Possessions, *Joshua* called to him the *Reubenites*, *Gadites*, and half Tribe of *Manasseh*; and acknowledging to them, that they had faithfully kept their Covenant, 22. in accompanying their Brethren, and helping them to subdue the Land; he kindly dismissed them, with good Counsel and a Blessing; wishing them to return to their own Possessions and Families. They therefore, taking their leave of their Brethren, at *Shiloh*, departed with much Riches, consisting in Silver, Gold, Brass, Iron, much Raiment, and very much Cattel; being their part of the Spoils of War, taken from the Enemies: and returned to their own Country.

A. M. 2560. But when they were come to the Borders of *Jordan*, they there built a great Altar; not intending it for Religious use: but to be as a Witness, or Evidence to after Ages, that tho' they were parted from the other Tribes by the River *Jordan*; yet they were all Brethren, of one Stock, Religion and way of Worship, and had equal Right to the Altar of the Lord at *Shiloh*, and to the Worship performed thereat; of which Altar at *Shiloh*, this, which they set up, was a true Draught.

It was not long before the other Nine Tribes and half (who are here, for Distinction sake, called the Children of *Israel*) had notice of this Altar being set up. And the matter either being misrepresented to them; or they, in a warm zeal, misapprehending it: and suspecting that their Brethren, on the other side *Jordan*, intended to revolt from God and them, and to set up for themselves; assembled unanimously at *Shiloh*, to go up to War against them. But before they took up Arms, they thought it adviseable to send Ambassadors to them, to expostulate the matter with them, and see if they would be reduced by fair means.

Choosing out therefore Ten Princes, one of each Tribe, and each of them the Head of his Father's House; they joyned to them, *Phineas*, the Son of *Elcazar* the Priest (who for his bold and commendable Zeal, in slaying *Zimri* and *Cosbi*, thereby suppressing a dangerous Rebellion, stopping the Plague, and making an Attonement for *Israel*, *Numb.* 25. had merited well, and was well accepted, of all the Tribes in general:) And sent them away, to examine the Cause of the new erected Altar.

These being come to their Brethren, the *Reubenites*, *Gadites*, and half Tribe of *Manasseh*, in the Land of *Gilead*, fell bluntly on them with a kind of Interrogatory Charge, in the name of the whole Congregation of the Lord, thus:

What Trespass is this (said they) that ye have committed against the God of *Israel*, to turn away this Day from following the Lord, in that ye have builded you an Altar, that ye might rebel this Day against the Lord?

And to exaggerate the Offence, They put them in mind of the Sin of *Peor* (*Numb.* 25.) Saying, Is the Sin of *Peor* too little for us (from which we are not cleansed to this Day, altho' there was a Plague in the Congregation of the Lord on that account;) but that ye must turn away this day from following the Lord: And to let them see, that it was not from an

an over-busy *pragmatick* Mind, that they thus came to call them to account, but that they had Reason to concern themselves in it, they added *Josh. 22.*
If ye thus rebel against the Lord, he will quickly be wroth with the whole Congregation of Israel.

By which it appears that, If in a Body or Society of People, whether Civil or Religious, a *publick* Transgression, altho' committed but by some *particular* Members, be *tolerated*, that is, *not condemned* and removed by the rest; it will subject the *whole* Society, or Body, to the *Guilt*, and consequently to the *Punishment* thereof.

This they confirm by the late Instance of *Achan*, who committing a *Trespass* in the *Accursed* thing, wrath fell on all the Congregation of *Israel*; and that Man perished not alone in his *Iniquity*.

Then to prevent an Objection, and take from them all pretence of Excuse or Defence, they added; *If ye have done this from an Apprehension, that the Land ye possess on that side Jordan is unclean, or less holy than ours, because the Tabernacle of the Lord is in our part, come back again, and settle among us, where the Lord's Tabernacle dwelleth: but by no means rebel against the Lord, nor against us, in building you an Altar beside the Altar of the Lord.*

From which words two observables arise. One, That to *add to*, or *alter* the Worship, or Religious Service, which God hath appointed, is to *rebel* against God. The other, that they who *so rebel* against the Lord, do therein *rebel* against his People: and are accountable therefore, not only to the Lord, but to his People also.

When the *Reubenites*, *Gadites* and *Manassites*, had heard this heavy Charge, they were troubled, that their Brethren should entertain so ill an Opinion of them: but knowing their own *Innocency*, and the *Integrity* of their *Intentions*, in what they had done; they applied themselves to inform their Brethren aright, and thereby to remove the *misconceived* Offence out of their Minds.

Beginning therefore with a *Solemn Appeal* to God (whom to shew their high Veneration of, and how far they were from turning from him, or preferring any other God to him, they call *the God of Gods*) they return Answer to *Phineas* and his Companions, the Heads of the *Thousands* of *Israel*, after this manner.

The Lord God of Gods, the Lord God of Gods, he knoweth, and Israel also shall know, whether we have built us an Altar in Rebellion, or in Transgression against the Lord, with an intent to turn from following the Lord: Or, have set up this Altar in opposition to the Altar of the Lord, to offer Burnt-offerings, Meat-offerings or Peace-offerings thereon; which we know the Lord hath forbidden. If we have done it to that end, let the Lord himself require it, and punish us for it; and do not ye spare us neither. But the Truth is, we have done it for fear of such a thing, and to prevent it. For we considered, that in time to come, your Children might say unto our Children, What have ye to do with the Lord God of Israel? For since the Lord hath made Jordan a Border and Bound between us and you, ye have no part in the Lord; that is, ye don't belong to the Congregation of the Lord; nor have any Right to come before his Tabernacle, nor to offer upon his Altar. And so your Children might be an Occasion to make our Children turn aside from serving the Lord. Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an Altar, not for Burnt-offering, nor for Sacrifice, but to be a Witnesses between us and you, and our Generations after us; that when we should come to perform our Service to the Lord, with our Burnt-Offerings, and our Sacrifices, before him, if your Children should say unto ours, Ye have no part in the Lord: our Children might reply, Behold the Pattern

Josh. 22. tern of the Altar of the Lord, which our Fathers made not to Sacrifice upon, but to be a Witness between us and you. But as to the matter ye charge us with; God forbid that we should rebel against the Lord, and turn this Day from following the Lord, to build an Altar for Burnt-offerings, Meat-offerings or Sacrifices, besides the Altar of the Lord our God, that is before his Tabernacle.

This Answer pleased Phineas, and the Princes of the Congregation so well, that they rejoiced at it; taking it for a Confirmation, that the Lord was still among them, in that their Brethren, the Reubenites, &c. had been preserved from committing the Trespas against the Lord, which they had been suspected of, and the whole Congregation thereby delivered from the Danger they feared.

Taking therefore their Leave of them, Phineas and his Companions returned to the Congregation of the Children of Israel at Shiloh; to report to them the good Tidings of their Brethren's Innocency, and of their Godly Care and Zeal, that their Posterity might be preserved in the Fear and Service of the true God; with which Account the Children of Israel were so pleased, that laying aside all thoughts of War, they blessed God for so good an Issue. The Reubenites and the Gadites, to prevent any future suspicion of their Intentions, called the Altar, which they had built, *ED*, which signifies, *A Witness*; adding, as the Reason of the Name, *For it shall be a Witness between us and our Brethren, the other Tribes of Israel, that the Lord is God*: As much as to say, the God of Israel is our God; they and we have but one and the same God.

Joshua being now grown old, and foreseeing his End to be near at hand, he called for all Israel, and for their Heads, Rulers and Officers, and briefly mentioning what the Lord had already done for them, and what he would yet further do for them, and enable them to do for themselves, if they were Courageous and Faithful, to keep and do all that is written in the Book of the Law of *Moses*, not in any thing turning aside there-from; he warned them particularly, not to come among those Nations, which yet remained (unsubdued) amongst them; nor entertain Familiarity, or Society with them: and to be so far from bowing unto their Gods, or serving them, or causing any to Swear by them, that they should not so much as make mention of their Names, which also the Lord had before expressly forbidden, *Exod. 23. 13.*

This is fit for them to consider of, who, professing to be under an higher Dispensation than that of *Moses*, do yet retain the Names of Heathenish Gods, in naming their Months and Days.

Joshua now also told the Israelites, that altho' the Lord had hitherto fought for them, and had driven out great and strong Nations from before them; yet if they should in any wise go back, to cleave unto the Remnant of those Nations that did yet remain among them, and should make Marriages with them, and enter into Friendship, and familiar Conversation with them: the Lord would no longer fight for them, nor drive out their Enemies from before them; but those Nations should be Snares and Traps unto them, Scourges in their Sides, and Thorns in their Eyes, and should cause them to perish from off that good Land, which the Lord their God had given them.

24. Afterwards more particularly recounting the Dealings of the Lord with them, and with their Fathers; and going as high as *Terah*, the Father of *Abraham*, (who dwelt on the other side of the Flood, or great River *Euphrates* in *Mesopotamia*) he deduced the Account from thence to his own time; briefly touching some of the most remarkable Passages between.

Then

Then solemnly declaring, That, whatever Course the rest should take he and his House would serve the Lord; he exhorted the People to fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and Truth: and invited them to *Renew their Covenant* with God; which they having done, in full and very significant Terms, he wrote the Words of their Covenant in the Book of the Law of God, and setting up a great *Stone*, under an Oak, by the Sanctuary of the Lord, he bid the People take notice, That that Stone (as if it had heard what had passed) should be a *Witness* unto them, to put them in mind of the Covenant that they had made, lest they should deny their God. Josh. 24.

Not long after this, *Joshua*, having attained to the Hundreth and Tenth Year of his Age, died, and was buried in the Border of his Inheritance, in *Timnath-Serah*, in Mount *Ephraim*; which City, upon the Division of the Land amongst the Tribes, the Children of *Israel*, by God's Direction (*Chap. 19. 49, 50.*) gave unto him, in *Token of Gratitude* for the *many Benefits* they had received by his Ministry. A. M.
2570.

Near the same time also died *Eleazar*, the Son of *Aaron*, the Priest; whom they buried in a Hill, which was given him in Mount *Ephraim*: which belonged to *Phineas*, his Son and Successor

But the Bones of *Joseph*, which the Children of *Israel* had brought up out of *Egypt* with them, they buried in *Shechem*, in a parcel of Ground, which *Jacob* had bought of the Sons of *Hamor*, the Father of *Shechem*: and it became the Inheritance of the Children of *Joseph*.

The End of the Book of JOSHUA.

 This Book is thought to have been written by *Joshua*, all except some part of the last Chapter; wherein mention is made of his Death, which is supposed to have been written by *Samuel the Prophet*.

T H E
B O O K
O F
J U D G E S:

Containing an History of about 300 Years.

BY whom, and in what time, this Book of the *Judges* Judg. 1. A. M. 2570. was compiled and written, is very uncertain. Some think by *Samuel* the last of the *Judges*. Others by *Ezra* the Scribe, long after.

It relates first, That after the Death of *Joshua*, the Children of *Israel* asked of the Lord, who should first go up for them, to fight against the *Canaanites*: and that the Lord appointed *Judah* to go up; declaring, that he had delivered (or determined to deliver) the Land into his Hand.

Whereupon *Judah* invited his Brother *Simeon* (whose Lot lay within his, *Josh. 19. 1.*) to go up with him into his Lot, that they might assail the *Canaanites* with their joyned Forces: engaging to do the like for him afterwards. *Simeon* agreed, and the Success of their Undertaking was, That the Lord delivered the *Canaanites* and the *Perizzites* into their Hand; and they slew of them Ten Thousand Men in *Bezek*. Then pursuing *Adoni-bezek* their King, who fled, they caught him; and cut off his *Thumbs*, and his great *Toes*. This drew from him an Acknowledgment of the Justice of God upon him: For he it seems (as himself confessed) had cut off the *Thumbs* and great *Toes* of no less than *Seventy* Kings; whom also, tho' so maimed, he caused to gather their Meat like Dogs, under his Table.

The Old City *Jebus* (possessed hitherto by the *Jebusites*, who sprang from *Jebusi*, the Third Son of *Canaan*, *Gen. 10. 16.*) here called *Jerusalem*, lay in Two Parts: whereof one Part fell into the Lot of *Judah*, the other into that of *Benjamin*. *Judah* soon o'er-ran that part of it, that belong'd to him: And having put the Inhabitants to the Sword, set the Place on Fire. But having brought the *Thumbless* King, *Adoni-bezek*, with him thither, there he died.

Among the many Places *Judah* now took, one was *Kirjath-sepher*; which was a part of *Caleb's* Portion: but possessed by the *Canaanites*.
Caleb

Judg. 1. Caleb therefore, old tho' he was, (as having out-run his Eighty Fifth Year, *Josh. 14. 10, 11.*) yet retaining his youthful Strength and Vigour, and resolving to *storm the Place*; that he might encourage his Men to the *Assault*, made *Proclamation* in his *Camp*, that he would give *Achsah*, his Daughter to Wife to him that should smite *Kirjath-sepher*, and take it.

So great a Prize raised the Courage of the adventurous young Men: And *Othniel*, a valiant Soldier, somewhat of Kin to *Caleb* (The Text says he was *Caleb's* younger Brother's Son) (as being, say *Tremellius* and *Junius*, of the Posterity of *Kenaz*; from whom *Caleb* being descended, was therefore called the *Kenezite*, *Numb. 32. 12.* and *Josh. 14. 14.*) won the Place, and thereby the fair Prize, *Caleb's* Daughter *Achsah*, whose Name imports *Trim* or *Neat*.

She, when she came to *Othniel*, put him upon begging a Field of her Father. But not thinking him forward enough in his Motion, she alighting from her Ass, addressed her self to her Father: who asking her what her Request was? she thereupon desired him in general Terms to give her a *Blessing*. But more particularly she said, *Thou hast given me a South-land* (which tho' it might be pleasant, yet lying hot, was likely to prove but dry and barren;) *Give me also Springs of Water: whereupon he gave her both the Upper, and the Nether Springs.*

This strenuous Old Man *Caleb*, who was a Prince of the Tribe of *Judah*, took *Hebron*, which was part of his Portion, from the Giants; and expelled thence the Three Sons of *Anak*.

But this Tribe, strong and valiant tho' it was, and recovered from the *Canaanites* many Places, as *Zephath-gaza*, *Askalon*, and *Ekron*; and drove out the Inhabitants of the *Mountains*: Yet the Inhabitants of the *Valley* they could not drive out; because they had Chariots of Iron.

Neither did the Children of *Benjamin* drive out the *Jebusites*, that inhabited that part of *Jerusalem* that fell to them: but the *Jebusites* dwelt with the Children of *Benjamin* in that part of *Jerusalem*.

The House of *Joseph* indeed, going up against *Beth-el*, did by the Assistance of the Lord, prevail. For they sending some to descry the City, the Spies seeing a Man come out of it, seized on him; and promising to shew him Mercy, if he would discover to them the Entrance into the City: he shewed them the way. Whereupon they entering, put the Inhabitants to the Sword, and delivered that Man and his Family.

But in other parts of the Country, neither did *Manasseh*, nor *Ephraim*, nor *Zebulun*, nor *Asher*, nor *Naphthali*, drive out the Inhabitants of the Land; but suffered them to dwell promiscuously amongst them: nay, the *Amorites* forced the Children of *Dan* into the Mountainous parts, and kept them pent up there, not suffering them to come down to the Valley.

By this means the *Israelites*, growing into Acquaintance, and Familiarity with those Heathen Nations did not drive them out; no not when afterwards they grew strong enough to have done it: but contenting themselves to make them *Tributaries*, and willing to entertain an Intercourse of Dealings with them, they let them continue to live amongst them.

This was directly contrary to the express Command of God, *Exod. 23. 32, 33.* and *Deut. 7. 2, &c.* And not only proved a *Snare* to them, but greatly displeased the Lord.

Judg. 2. Wherefore the Lord, to reprove them, sent an Angel (or Messenger, so the Word *Angel* signifies, and so it is explained here in the Margin, and is supposed to be *Phineas* the Priest) to them; who laying before them

them the *Goodness* of the Lord, and his *Favour* to them, in delivering them out of *Egypt*, and bringing them into that good Land; *Judg. 2.* his *Faithfulness* in keeping his Covenant with them; and their *Ingratitude* and *Unfaithfulness*, in not obeying the Voice of the Lord, but acting quite contrary to his Command, whereby they had provoked him to withdraw his Help from them: the People thereupon seemed, for the present, so sensible of their *Fault*, that they lift up their Voice and wept, and offered Sacrifice to the Lord; calling the Name of the Place, where they received this Reproof, *Bochim*, which signifies *Weepers*.

Mention was made in *Josh. 24. 31.* (and the same is repeated here *Judg. 2. 7.*) That the People of *Israel* served the Lord all the Days of *Joshua*, and all the Days of the Elders that out-lived *Joshua*, who had seen all the great Works of the Lord, that he wrought for *Israel*. But when that Generation was gathered to their Fathers, and there arose another Generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the Works which he had done for *Israel*, *ver. 10.* the Children of *Israel*, did evil in the Sight of the Lord, and served *Baalim*, *ver. 11.* that is, the lesser, or *Tutelar* Gods (so called) of the several Nations about them.

And indeed, scarce were their Tears wiped off at *Bochim*, and their Eyes dried, ere they, forsaking the Lord God of their Fathers, followed other Gods: as *Baal* (the chief and most general God of the Heathens;) And *Asheroth*, the Idol of the *Zidonians*, represented in the Form of a *Sheep*. Whereby they provoked the Lord to Anger, so that he often gave them up into the Hands of the *Spoilers*, of which, and of the *Deliverances* he wrought for them, upon their *Repenting* and crying to him for Help, a general Account is given in this *Chap.* from *Ver. 14.* to the end.

It was because of their *Unfaithfulness* and *Disobedience*, that the Lord, refusing to drive out their Enemies for them, whom they themselves *Judg. 3.* were too *favourable* to, had suffered some of the Nations to remain among them. Whom yet they ought to have kept at *Arms-end*, (as one may say) and not to have entred into *League*, *Friendship*, or *Familiarity* with. For, beside that it was expressly forbidden in the Law, (*Exod. 23. 32.* and *34. 12.* repeated in *Deut. 7. 2, 3, &c.*) *Joshua*, but just before his Death, had particularly warned them of the Danger they would run into, if they should entertain Familiarity with any of those Nations, that were by God appointed to Destruction. And above all things charged them to take care, that they did *not make Marriages* with them, as knowing how naturally that would lead to the worship-*Judg. 23.* ping of their Gods, *Josh. 23.* yet all that notwithstanding the Children of *Israel* now indulging themselves the Liberty to dwell among the *Canaanites*, *Hittites*, *Amorites*, *Perizzites*, *Hivites* and *Jebusites*; and growing into a *Neighbourly Familiarity* with them: they took their Daughters to be Wives, and gave their Daughters for Wives (to their Sons) and then what followed? And *served their Gods*, *Ver. 5, 6.* So sure a Rule it is, that *strange Marriages lead to strange Worship*.

Upon these so high *Provocations*, the Anger of the Lord was hot against *Israel*; and he sold them into the Hand of *Cushan-rishathaim*, King of *Mesopotamia*, whose Name signifies, *Blackness of Iniquities*; yet he did not sell them absolutely, and for ever; but for eight Years. In which time of *Apprentiship*, and hard *Servitude*, the Children of *Israel* coming to a Sense, and Acknowledgment of their Transgressions, and crying to the Lord for help; the Lord raised up a Deliverer to them.

This was *Othniel* (the same that had married *Caleb's* Daughter) upon whom the Spirit of the Lord came, which fitted him to judge *Israel*:

And without some measure of which, none can be duly qualified to judge. He, in the Strength thereof, going out to War, the Lord delivered the King of *Mesopotamia* into his Hands; and he prevailed against him: And upon this Defeat of the *Syrians*, the Land had rest Forty Years, to be computed, as some think, from the Death of *Joshua*.

But after *Othniel* was dead, the Children of *Israel* did evil again in the Sight of the Lord. Of which Two great Instances are given in the 17, 18, and 19th Chapters of this Book. Which tho' cast back to the end of the Book, as if they belonged to later times: Yet, by the Judgment of divers Learned Men, were Transacted about this time. By whose Reasons perswaded, rather than prevailed on by the Authority of their Names (how great soever,) I choose to insert those Stories here, as the most likely time for such Evils to have been committed in. For it is plain from the Text, that these things happened, when *there was no King* (that is Ruler; for King, in a proper Sense, there never yet had been) *In Israel: But every Man did that which was right in his own Eyes*. But not to be positive, or over-curious in a Matter somewhat doubtful; whensoever this fell out, the matter of Fact is delivered thus.

A certain devout Woman, of the Tribe of *Dan*, through a mistaken and ignorant Zeal, had dedicated a Sum of Money unto the Lord, and laid it by, intending her Son should make therewith a graven Image, and a molten Image. Her Son (a Man of Mount *Ephraim*, whose Name was *Micah*) finding his Mother's Money, and not knowing what she intended to do with it, made bold to steal it from her. She missing her Money, and not knowing who had robbed her, nor at all suspecting her Son, did, in her Son's hearing, denounce a Curse upon the Thief (and, as she reputed, Sacreligious Person) that had taken it. This wrought so far upon the Son, that he thereupon Confessing the Fact, told his Mother, It was he that had taken her Money: and having it still whole by him, he restored it to her, being Eleven Hundred Shekels of Silver. Which (if common Shekels) at One Shilling Three Pence each, would arise to Sixty Eight Pounds and Fifteen Shillings of English Money: but, if Shekels of the Sanctuary, double that Sum.

The Mother, having received her Money again, took out Two Hundred Shekels of it and gave it to a *Founder*; who made thereof a graven Image, and a molten Image; and they were set in *Micah's* House: for he, it seems, had a House of Gods (that is, *Idols* or *Images*) and made an *Ephod*, and *Teraphim* (probably, with the rest of the Dedicated Money,) and Consecrated one of his Sons to be his Priest, for a while, till he could light upon a *Levite*.

If any should desire to be informed what *Teraphim* was, Authors tell us that *Teraphim* were Images; for the most part, of Men: yet sometimes, of other Creatures, as particularly *Dogs*, for their Watchfulness in guarding the House. This latter Sort were accounted the Tutelar, or Protecting Gods; answerable to the *Lares* and *Penates*, or Household Gods, amongst the *Romans*. Those *Teraphim*, which bore the Image of a Man, or, at least, of the Head of a Man, were used as *Oracles*, to be consulted with, and enquired of in any doubtful or hidden Matter. These were Consecrated by Magical Art, to engage some Evil Spirit to speak through them, and give Answers to the Enquirers. *Laban's* Gods, which his Daughter *Rachel* stole from him, *Gen. 31. 19.* are called *Teraphim* (see the Margin;) and are thought by some to have been such Oracular Images; and that she therefore took them, that her Father might not, by consulting with them, know which way her Husband was gone. But it looks too gross: I rather think they

they were but the common *Penates*, or Household Gods. See *Godwyn's Moses and Aaron*, l. 4. c. 9. and *D'Assigny's History of the Heathen*: *Judg.* 17. Gods, *lib.* 1. *chap.* 15. for further Information.

Now tho' the Times were *Evil*, and the People, for want of Government, and by intermingling with the *Heathen Nations*, had *corrupted* their Ways, yet it is hard to conceive, that they could be already so far degenerated, as to set up those *Oracular Images*, to ask Counsel of the Devil by. But it is probable they thought they might worship God by, or through Images (as too many, who are called *Christians*, at this Day do) For it is evident, that *Micah's Mother* dedicated her Money to the Lord, which she designed for the making of Images, *Judg.* 17. 3. and *Micah* himself, when he made the *Tera- phim*, made also an *Ephod*, ver. 5. Which was a Garment, appointed by God for the Priests to wear, *Exod.* 28. 4. and by which they did ask Counsel of God, *1 Sam.* 30. 7, 8.

We observed before that *Micah*, for want of a *Levite*, had appointed one of his own Sons to officiate for him as *Priest*, till he could get one; which was not long first: for in a little while, a certain young Man, that was a *Levite*, and had Sojourned at *Beth-lehem-Judah*, departing from thence, to get a Place, came, in his Journey, to *Micah's House* in Mount *Ephraim*. But that he, being a *Levite*, was of the Family of *Judah*, is not easy to be apprehended.

Micah asking him whence he came; and he answering, that he was of *Beth-lehem-Judah*, and was going to sojourn where he could find a Place: *Micah* invited him to tarry there, and dwell with him, and be unto him a *Father*, and a *Priest*; offering him, for his Wages, *Ten Shekels* of Silver by the Year, and his *Victuals*, and *Two Suits of Apparel*, one for common Wearing, and the other to Minister in. If these *Shekels* were of the *Sanctuary*, the *Ten* would amount to *Twenty Five Shillings* Sterling: But if they were *common Shekels*, they would come to but half that Money. However, the *Levite*, liking the Terms, was content to dwell with *Micah*; and so went in, and became one of his Family. *Micah*, on the other hand, was much pleased, in the Hope and Confidence he now had, that the Lord would do him good, seeing he had got a *Levite* to be his *Priest*.

Who this young *Levite* was, is hard to say. He is called *Jonathan*, the Son of *Gershom* the Son of *Manasseh*, *chap.* 18. 30. But who this *Manasseh* was, who can tell? *Tremellius* and *Junius* call *Jonathan* *Pronepos Moschis, ex Manasseh*. *Annot.* on *Judg.* 17. 1. As if *Manasseh* had been *Moses's Son*, *Gershom* *Moses's Grandson*, and this *Jonathan* *Moses's Great-Grandson*. But since we read of no more but Two Sons that *Moses* had, to wit, *Gershom* and *Eliezar*, (*Exod.* 18. 4.) where must we seek for his Son *Manasseh*, whereby to make *Gershom* not his Son, but his Grandson? The old Latin Translation, which is called *Ferom's*, reads it, *Jonathan the Son of Gershom, the Son of Moses*: And *Broughton* says, the *Hebrews* read — *Moses* for *Manasses*. Which sounds most likely, if any such *Jonathan, Son of Gershom* can be found; and whose Age may suit the time of the Story.

Whoever this young *Levite* was, he had not been long settled with *Micah*, ere an Accident fell out, which unsettled him again. The Occasion and Manner whereof, was thus.

The Lot of the Tribe of *Dan*, which fell to them upon the Division of the Land in *Joshua's* time, proving too little for them, *Josh.* 19. 47. and they not enjoying all that neither, (for the *Amorites* would not suffer them to possess the Valley, which was the best and richest part; but forced them up into the Mountainous or Hilly part, *Judg.* 18.

Judg. 1. 34.) the Children of *Dan* were fain to seek out for more room, to enlarge their Quarters. Wherefore chusing out five valiant Men, of their Family, they sent them forth, to spy, and search the Land.

These coming to Mount *Ephraim*, to the House of *Micah*, lodged there, and knowing the young *Levite* by his Voice, they asked him, Who brought him thither? And what he made, (or what Business he had) in that Place? He told them what Agreement *Micah* had made with him; and that he was *hired*, and that he was *Micah's Priest*. When they heard that, they desired him to ask Counsel of God, that they might know whether their Journey would be prosperous or no. He bid them *Go in Peace*: for their way was before the Lord (meaning, Their Undertaking was approved by the Lord.)

With this Encouragement on they went, till they came to a City called *Laiſh*. Where entering, and making their Observations, they took notice that the People there lived very *secure* and careleſs, and *without all manner of Discipline or Government*: for there was *no Magistrate* in the Land, that might order or restrain them, and that they were far from Succours, and had no Allies. So that they concluded it would be no difficult matter to over-come them, and poſſeſs the Place. And with that Report they returned to their Brethren, that had ſent them out; giving Account, that the Land they had ſearched was *large*, and very *good*, abounding with all the neceſſary Conveniencies and Accommodations, that the People lived ſo ſecurely, that they might eaſily be ſurprized, and ſubdued. And to quicken them to the Undertaking, told them, *God had given that Land into their Hands*.

Thus encouraged, the *Danites* ſent forth a Colony of Six Hundred Men, well-armed, to go and poſſeſs themſelves of the City *Laiſh*. Theſe marching through Mount *Ephraim*, came, in their way, to the Houſe of *Micah*. And making a *Halt* there, the Five Men (who, in ſearching the Country, had been there before, and went now as Guides to the Party) acquainted their Brethren, that there was in that Houſe an *Ephod* and *Teraphim*, and a *graven* and a *molten Image*: wiſhing them thereupon to *conſider what they had to do*; that is, whether they had beſt tarry there, to aſk Counsel of the Lord, concerning the Succeſs of their Enterprize, or take the *Ephod* and *Images* with them, to conſult with upon all Occaſions.

The Event ſhews, they thought this laſt the beſt: for the Five Men that were the Guides, leaving the whole Party without the Gate, turned in; and *Micah* himſelf being from home, they ſaluted the *Levite*, and ſent him forth to the *Danites* at the Gate. And while he was held in Diſcourſe abroad the *Guides* knowing the Rooms in the Houſe (as having been there before) went in, and taking the *Ephod*, the *Teraphim*, and the other *Images*, brought them out to their Brethren at the Gate.

This ſtartled the young *Priest*: and he briskly aſked them, *What they meant to do*? But they ſoon whiſted him, bidding him, *Lay his hand upon his Mouth, and hold his Peace, and go with them*: putting him to conſider, whether were it better for him, to be *Priest* unto the Houſe of *one Man*; or unto a *Tribe*, and a Family in *Israel*?

The *Advantage* and *Preferment* he was like to have by this Change, tickled the young *Priest*; ſo that it is ſaid, *The Priest's Heart was glad*. So early it ſeems, did this *Itch* of Shifting from a *leſſer* to a *greater Benefice*, ſeize ſome of that Function. Not ſtaying therefore to take his leave of his old Maſter, away ran the *Priest* with this new Company, taking with him the *Ephod* and the *Images* (whereby he made himſelf

self an *Accessory*, at least, to their *Theft*) and on they marched together; putting the Little Ones, with the Cattle and the Carriages *Judg. 18.* before them.

When *Micah* came home, and understood that both his *Priest* and his *Gods* were gone, he gathered his Neighbours together, and followed after the *Danites*. But they having got the *Start* of him, were gone a good way from his House, before he could overtake them. At length when he came near, and sent his *Outcry* before him, some of the *Danite* Soldiers facing about, asked *Micah* what he ailed, that he came with such a Company? Why, said he, *Ye have taken away my Gods which I made, and the Priest; and what have I more? And do ye ask me what I ail? O said they to him, Let not thy Voice be heard among us, lest angry Fellows run upon thee; and thou and thy Company lose your Lives.* Poor *Micah*, finding himself over-match'd was fain to put up the wrong, (as he thought it) and return home, without either Gods or Priest: A great Gainer, had he rightly understood it, by the Loss of both.

Mean while the *Danites*, continuing their March came in a while to *Laiish*; and finding the People quiet and secure, they set the City on Fire: by which means they, being comparatively but few in number, had the Advantage of falling upon the Citizens, while they were busied in quenching the Fire, and put them all to the Sword.

Afterwards rebuilding the City, they called it *Dan*; after the Name of their Father. And settling there, they set up *Micah's* graven Image, which having stolen, they had brought with them; and making the young *Levite*, *Jonathan*, their Priest, he and his Sons continued to officiate as Priests to the Tribe of *Dan*, all the time that the House of God was in *Shiloh*, until the Captivity of the Land: which is reckoned to be till the *Ark*, in *Eli's* time, was taken by the *Philistines*, 1 Sam. 4. about Three Hundred Years after this.

As this is an Instance of a great *Apostacy*, and *Corruption* in Religion: so that which follows is as pregnant a Proof of *Immorality*, and foul *Depravation* of *Manners*. And thus it was.

A certain *Levite*, sojourning on the side of Mount *Ephraim*, took him a *Concubine* out of *Beth-lehem-judah*. She, it seems, being a light House-wife, had plaid the Whore; and thereupon, either for Fear, or Shame, left her Husband, and ran home to her Father at *Beth-lehem-judah*: where she remained full Four Months. In which time, her Husband having somewhat digested the Injury, he went at the Four Months end to her Father's; intending to be reconciled to her, and bring her back with him: in order to which, he took with him a Servant and a couple of Asses.

Being come thither, she brought him into her Father's House: And her Father received him with much Joy, being glad to see him; and entertained him for Three Days. On the Fourth Day Morning getting up betimes, they prepared to be going; but the Woman's Father would not let them go, till they had eaten: and after they had eaten, he prevailed with his Son-in-law, to tarry one Night longer. Next Day he kept them until Afternoon; and then alledging that it was too late to set out upon a Journey, would have perswaded his Son-in-law to have staid with him that Night also. But he, being now fully resolved to be gone, would not yield to his Father-in-law's Importunity: but taking leave of him, set his *Concubine* upon one of his Asses, and himself mounting the other, departed with his Servant.

By that time they were got as far as *Jebus* (that part of *Jerusalem* which belonged to *Benjamin*, but was possessed (mostly) by the *Jebusites*) the Day was far spent; and the Servant, fearing to be benighted,

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Judg. 19. desired his Master to *turn in thither*, and take up his Lodging there. But the Master, considering that *Jebois* was a strange City, not then (fully) possessed by the Children of *Israel*, would not go thither: but bid his Man go on, that (if possible) they might reach *Gibeah*, or *Ramah* to lodge in.

Gibeah belonged to the Tribe of *Benjamin*, whither they got just as the Sun went down; and sat them down in a Street of the City, as the manner of Travellers then was, waiting to see who would invite them to a Lodging: but for a good while, none did.

At length came an Old Man, from his Work, out of the Field; who seeing a Way-faring Man in the Street, went to him: and saluting him, asked him whence he came, and which way he was Travelling?

The Levite told him that he was of Mount *Ephraim*, had been at *Beth-lehem-judah*, and was now returning to the House of the Lord at *Shiloh*: but that no Man offered him a Lodging, tho' he had *Provisions* for himself and his Company, and *Provender* for his Cattel; so that he needed not be chargeable to any Body.

The Hospitable Old Man, (who himself was of Mount *Ephraim* also, tho' he dwelt at *Gibeah*) courteously invited him to lodge at his House; bidding him not trouble himself about *Provisions*, but let all his Wants lie upon him.

Taking them therefore home with him, when he had given the Asses *Provender*; and the Guests (as the manner of Travellers, in those Eastern Countries, then was) had washed their Feet: They all sat down to Supper.

But before they had done eating, behold, the Men of the City, wicked Men as they were, having beset the House round, beat at the Door, to have broken it; but it not breaking, they called to the Master of the House, just as the *Sodomites* did to *Lot*, saying, *Bring forth the Man, that came into thy House, that we may know him*; that is, abuse him in that unnatural way, which is called *Sodomy*.

The good Old Man, to prevent Danger to his Guests, ventured himself amongst this Tumultuous Rabble, intreating them, by the gentle Compellation of Brethren, to give over their Foolish Undertaking; and not be so wicked, as to violate the Laws of *Hospitality*. And, as *Lot* did of old, to pacifie them, offered them his own only Daughter (who was a Virgin) and the Levite's Concubine, to use and abuse at their Pleasure; so they would not offer any Violence to his Guest himself: but they would not hearken to him.

When therefore the Levite saw that the Men grew more outrageous, he to save himself, turn'd his Concubine out among them; and *her they abused all Night*, not letting her go till break of Day: and then the poor Woman, returning to the House where her Lord lay, *fell down dead at the Door thereof*, with her Hands upon the Threshold.

In the Morning when her Lord opened the Door, and saw his Concubine lying there, he (thinking she had been asleep) said to her, *Up, and let us be going*. But when, she not answering, he perceived she was Dead, he took her up, and laying her upon his Ass, got him home as fast as he could. And as soon as he was come home, taking a Knife, he divided his Concubine, the Flesh with the Bones into *Twelve Pieces*; and sent them into all the Coasts of *Israel*, to every Tribe a Piece; that so the whole House of *Israel*, being made sensible of the Injury, might revenge it.

A Thing so Barbarous in it self, and represented in a manner so Abhorrent from Nature, made deep Impression on the Minds of the Israelites in General. All that saw it said, *There was no such Deed done nor seen, since*

since the Day that the Children of Israel came up out of Egypt. And that they might Acquit themselves from the Guilt of so heinous a Crime, by doing Justice on the Offenders; the whole Congregation of the Children of Israel was gathered together, as one Man, from Dan, even to Beer-sheba, (that is, from one End of the Land to the other,) with the Land of Gilead, unto the Lord in Mizpeh (which signifies Judgment) that there they might examine the Business before the Lord.

When therefore all the Chief of the People, out of all the Tribes of Israel, no fewer than Four Hundred Thousand Footman, that drew the Sword, had presented themselves in the Assembly of the People of God, they required the Levite (the Men of Gibeah having had notice, and not appearing) to give them an Account, how this Wickedness was committed. Judg. 20.

He, in Answer, thus related the Matter to them. *I came into Gibeah, that belongs unto Benjamin; I and my Concubine, to lodge. And the Men of Gibeah rose against me, and beset the House round about upon me by Night, intending to have slain me: but my Concubine they have forced, that she is Dead; whereby they have committed Lewdness and Folly in Israel. Whereupon I took my Concubine, and having cut her in Pieces, I sent her throughout all the Country of the Inheritance of Israel. Now, ye, being Children of Israel, are concerned in this Abuse, as well as I: Therefore consider, and advise what is to be done.*

When the People had received this Account of the Matter, they were highly incensed against the Men of Gibeah; and unanimously resolved, not to return to their own Houses (unless they received Satisfaction from Gibeah) until they had brought the Offenders to Punishment. Wherefore they determined, that (if the Men of Gibeah should refuse, upon Demand, to deliver up the Criminals to Justice) they would go up against Gibeah by Lot, and chastise the Men of Gibeah, according to all the Folly that they had wrought in Israel. And that they might have no Diversion or Hindrance, they agreed to draw forth Ten Men out of every Hundred, an Hundred out of every Thousand, and a Thousand out of every Ten Thousand; whose Business it should be, to fetch and bring Provisions, and Necessaries to the Army.

Thus resolved, they sent Men throughout all the Tribe of Benjamin, to lay the weight of this Matter before them, and to demand those Men, the Men of Belial, that were in Gibeah, who had committed this outrageous Villany, to be delivered up to them: that they might put them to Death, and thereby put away this great Evil from Israel.

But the Children of Benjamin, instead of joyning with their Brethren, to do Justice on those Malefactors, resolved, in contempt of their Brethren the Israelites, to stand by them, and defend them. And in order thereunto, they gathered themselves together, out of their other Cities, to Gibeah, to go out to Battel against the Children of Israel.

The Israelites, that came against Gibeah, were, upon the Muster, Four Hundred Thousand fighting Men. Whereas the Benjamitish Army consisted of but Six and Twenty Thousand, besides the Men of Gibeah, which were but Seven Hundred. A bold Undertaking sure it was, for so small a Body to stand against so great an Host. But as the Cause was bad, so the Men were desperate.

On the other hand, the Israelites, in their Strength and Numbers over-confident, despised the Benjamites, because they were so few. And determining of themselves the justness of the Cause, ne'er went to ask Counsel of God, whether they should make War upon their Brethren, or no. But taking that for granted; that no Emulation and Difference might arise among the Tribes, about Precedence in this Service, they

they went up to the House of God, only to know which of the Tribes
Judg. 20. should lead the Van in that Expedition : and the Lot fell to *Judah*.

The *Israelitish* Army thereupon advancing, fate down before *Gibeab*, and offered Battel to the *Benjamites*. Whereupon the *Benjamites*, making a brisk Sally, cut down Two and twenty Thousand of them ; and retreated into *Gibeab*, with very little Loss.

This so unexpected Disaster much troubled the *Israelites* : and they now saw it was needful to enquire of the Lord, not only who should go up first to the Battel ; but whether they should go to the Battel at all, or no ? Wherefore weeping before the Lord, they now ask Counsel of him, whether they should go up again to Battel against the Children of *Benjamin* their Brother, or not ? and the Lord bid them go up against him.

Whereupon, encouraging themselves, they drew up their Forces again before *Gibeab* ; and offered Battel to the *Benjamites*. Who making another bold Sally, slew Eighteen Thousand more of them.

With this Second Loss the Children of *Israel* were much dejected. Wherefore now, being more sensible of their former *Presumption* and *Neglect*, they humbled themselves before the Lord ; and all the People, going up to the House of the Lord, wept, and fasted before the Lord that Day until the Evening : and offered *Burnt-Offerings* and *Peace-Offerings* before the Lord. After which they enquired more regularly of the Lord, whether they should yet again go forth to Battel against the Children of *Benjamin*, their Brother, or should forbear ? For the *Ark* of the Covenant of God was then there in *Shiloh* ; and *Phineas*, the Son of *Eleazer*, the Son of *Aaron*, stood before it, that is, was *Priest*, in those Days. Which (rejecting that *Rabbinical Dream*, that *Phineas* lived Three Hundred Years) shews, that this Story fell early in the Times of the Judges. And now the Lord, having corrected the *Israelites* for their *Presumption* and *Self-confidence*, bid them go up again against the *Benjamites*, assuring them, that to Morrow he would deliver them into their Hand : as no doubt he had done at the first, if they had then gone the right way to work.

Now was the Battel prepared the Third time. But the Men of *Israel*, that they might at length make sure Work, resolved to use a Stratagem ; laying an Ambush in the Meadows, behind *Gibeab* : with direction that, when the Battel should be joyned, and the *Israelites*, by a feigned Flight, should have drawn the *Benjamites* from the City, the Men in Ambush seizing the City, should set it on Fire, as a Signal to the *Israelites* to rally and reinforce the Fight.

Accordingly, Ten Thousand chosen Men of *Israel* presenting themselves before *Gibeab* ; the *Benjamites*, issuing forth, fell fiercely upon them : and slew about Thirty of them. Whereupon the rest retiring, as if they fled, the *Benjamites*, flush'd with their former Victories, concluded the Day was their own ; and supposing them to fly in earnest, pursued with all their Force, till they were gone so far from the City, that the Men, who lay in Ambush, rushing in, set it on Fire. Which when the *Israelites* saw, they faced about, and charging furiously on the *Benjamites*, made them give back, and turn head, to secure themselves in their City.

But when, by the Smoke and Flame, they saw they were circumvented ; they fled before the Men of *Israel*, unto the way of the Wilderness. But being enclosed between the main Army of the *Israelites*, and that Party of them which were laid in Ambush (who having set the Town on Fire, fell in upon the *Benjamites*) they were chased, and trodden down with ease. So that there fell of them that Day, in the Battel

Battel and in the Pursuit, *Five and twenty Thousand and One Hundred* Men. And a *Thousand* more having been destroyed, some in the former *Judg. 20.* Battels, some in *Gibeab*, when it was taken and burnt; there remained but *Six Hundred* Men of the *Benjamites*: who flying to the *Rock Rimmon*, and hiding themselves there, by that means saved their Lives; all the rest of the Tribe of *Benjamin* being cut off. For the Men of *Israel*, having cleared the Field, turned again, in their Martial Heat, upon the Children of *Benjamin*, in every City; and put them to the Sword, both Man and Beasts: setting on Fire also all the Cities of *Benjamin*, that they came to.

Thus did that whole Tribe *pay dear*, for refusing to do Justice on some of their offending Members. Which may be a good caution to all others, to beware how they neglect Justice.

But when the Men of *Israel* came, in *cool Blood*, to consider the Slaughter they had made of the *Benjamites*; and to how low a Condition that Tribe was thereby reduced, they were greatly troubled: and the rather, for that, upon their first Engaging in this Quarrel, they had, by an hasty and *unadvised* Oath, bound themselves before the Lord, that none of them should give his Daughter to a *Benjamite* to wife: Which tended to the utter Extirpation of that Tribe.

The sense of this brought Grief upon them; so that going to the House of God (to wit, the *Tabernacle*, where the *Ark* was,) they abode there till Even before God, and with lifted up Voices, wept sorely, *Judg. 21.* saying, O Lord God of *Israel*, why is this come to pass in *Israel*, that there should be to Day one Tribe lacking in *Israel*? And getting up early next Morning, they built an Altar there, and offered Burnt-offerings and Peace-offerings to the Lord.

Then applying themselves to find out some *Expedient*, whereby to elude their rash Oath, and save the sinking Tribe; they called to mind, that they had also, at the first, bound themselves by a great Oath, that whosoever, of the other Tribes of *Israel*, should neglect or fail to come up to the Lord at *Mizpeh*, on that occasion, to joyn with their Brethren against the *Benjamites*, he should surely be put to Death. Whereupon they made a Search; and by numbring the People, found, that there came none from *Jabesh-Gilead*, to the Assembly at the Camp.

It was indeed a great Fault in these *Gileadites*, that, in a Common Cause, where such a Wickedness was committed by some few, as, if not punished, would bring a Judgment upon the whole Commonwealth of *Israel*, they should appear so unconcerned, as if they favoured the Fact. But the proceeding of their Brethren, the Children of *Israel*, against them, seems very severe. For with out sending (that appears) to know the Reason of their not coming, they sent away *Twelve Thousand* of their ablest Men, with positive Commission to fall upon *Jabesh-Gilead*, and put all to the Sword, Man, Woman and Child; except only such *Marriageable young Women*, as had never lain with Man: all which they were to save, and bring with them to the Camp; and so they did, bringing *Four Hundred Virgins* back with them.

When these *Four Hundred Damsels* were come, the Congregation sent *Heralds* to treat with the *Benjamites*, that were in the *Rock Rimmon*; to offer them Peace and Safety, and invite them to return. These poor Creatures, having lain hid there *Four Months*, willingly embracing the Offer, came to the Camp; and the Congregation bestowed on them those *Gileaditish Maidens* for Wives: but the *Benjamites* being *Six Hundred*, and these *Damsels* but *Four Hundred*; there was not for every Man one.

This set their Wits at work again. They concluded, that some way
Judg. 21. must be found, to preserve that Tribe from being utterly destroyed : but
 hard it was to find a way ; having barred themselves from giving
 them any of their Daughters for Wives.

At length they bethought themselves, that there was a *Feast* of the
 Lord holden in *Shiloh* every Year ; to which the *Daughters* of *Shiloh*
 used to come, and celebrated the same with Dancing before the Lord.

They therefore directed the *Benjamites*, that wanted Wives, to go
 and lie in wait in the Vine-yards ; and when they should see the *Shiloh-*
Damsels come forth, and be busie in dancing, they should suddenly
 break forth upon them ; and catching every Man one for his Wife,
 carry them away into the Land of *Benjamin*.

And that they might not fear an After-clap, from the *Relations* of the
 Maids so taken ; they told them, If the Maids *Fathers*, or *Brethren*,
 come to us, (who are the *Heads* of the Tribes) to complain of you :
 we will intreat them to be favourable unto you, for our sakes, because
 we were to blame, in not reserving to every one of you a Wife, in the
 War. And if they should be *scrupulous* of having broke their Oath ;
 we will tell them, They did not at this time give you their Daughters :
 but ye took them.

The *Benjamites*, thus instructed and secured, watched the time ;
 and catching up every one a *Dancing Damsel*, went off with them
 into their own Inheritance : where, repairing their Cities, they set-
 tled again ; and in time recruited their Tribe.

In all this we may see, how *wretched a Thing* it is to be *without Go-*
vernment : for these Things happened in those Days, when there was *no*
Ruler in Israel.

Judg. 3. But these so heinous Sins provoked the Lord to chastise *Israel* again
A. M. by their Enemies. Wherefore he strengthened and encouraged *Eglon*
2628. King of *Moab* against them ; and made him a *Scourge* to them, who else
 had neither *Strength* nor *Courage* to have attacked *Israel*. But being
 thus stirred up, *Eglon* gathering unto him the Children of *Ammon* and
Amalek, went and smote *Israel*, and possessed the City of *Palm-trees*.
 And as it was an *Aggravation* of their *Offence*, that having been *re-*
deem'd from *Thralldom* before, they did so soon *Transgress* again : so for
 an *Aggravation* of their *Punishment*, their *Servitude* was now advanced
 from *Eight Years* (which was the *Term* of their former Bondage) to
Eighteen ; for so long they served the King of *Moab*.

Yet when the Children of *Israel*, under the Sense of their *Misery*,
 cried again to the Lord ; he raised them up another *Deliverer*, *Ehud*,
 the Son of *Gera*, a Left-handed Man, of the Tribe of *Benjamin*.

Ehud did not go to work, as *Othniel* had done, by plain and open
 War ; which perhaps *Israel* weakened by *Eighteen Years* *Servitude*,
 and the Tribe of *Benjamin* especially, by the Blow they had received,
 but a little before, (in the *Levite's Case*) might not then be in a Con-
 dition to undertake. But he contrived, first to take off *Eglon* pri-
 vately ; as knowing it would be much easier to deal with the *Moabites*,
 when they should be in Confusion for want of a Leader : than while
 they had their King at the Head of them.

Repairing therefore to the *Moabitish* Court, under pretence that he
 had a *Present* to deliver to the King, from his Servants the Children
 of *Israel* ; he was admitted to the King's Presence. And when he had
 delivered his *Present*, and sent away his Servants that brought it thi-
 ther, he himself returning alone, told the King, he had a *private Message*
to him : whereupon the King bidding him *keep Silence*, till the Compa-
 ny had voided the Room ; all the King's Attendance withdrew, leav-
 ing them two alone. *Ehud*

Ehud then, drawing near to him, said, *I have a Message from God unto thee.* At that word the King, in Reverence to the Name of God, *Judg. 3.* arose out of his Seat; not expecting so sharp a Message, as he received.

Mean while *Ehud*, with his left Hand drawing forth a *Dagger* (or Two-edged *Sword*) of half a Yard long (which he had provided for that purpose, and had privily girded, under his Garment, upon his right Thigh) thrust it suddenly into the King's Belly: and that so forceably, that the *Haft* went in after the *Blade*. And the King being a very fat Man, the Fat of his Belly closed over the *Dagger*, so that he could not draw it out. And there lay this fat Calf (so the word *Eglon* signifies) wallowing in his own Blood and Dung. But none, I hope, will draw this Act of *Ehud*'s into Example.

When *Ehud* saw that King *Eglon* was dead, he went out of the Room, shutting the Door after him, and locking it. And when the King's Servants saw *Ehud* depart, they returned, to give their usual Attendance on their Master. But when they found the Door locked, they waited without; supposing he was gone to the necessary House, to ease Nature: which they modestly express by a cleanly Phrase, that *He covered his Feet in his Summer Chamber*. Upon this Consideration they tarried, till they were ashamed: but when they saw, that he opened not the Door; they at length took a Key, and opened it. And then, to their Amazement, they found their Lord was fallen down dead on the Earth.

Their delaying gave *Ehud* a fair Opportunity to Escape: which he did. And when he was come to Mount-*Ephraim*, blowing a Trumpet, he quickly gathered the Children of *Ephraim* about him. Unto whom he said, *Follow me: for the Lord hath delivered your Enemies, the Moabites, into your hands.* They thereupon following him as their Leader, went down from the Mount; and securing the *Fords* of *Moab*, towards *Jordan*, suffered not a Man to pass over: but falling courageously upon the *Moabites*, slew about Ten Thousand of the Chief of them; and both delivered *Israel*, and subdued *Moab* that Day.

By means whereof, and of an Additional Help, which they received afterwards, by *Shamgar*, the Son of *Anath*, a strong and valiant Man; who, no better armed than with an *Ox-goad*, slew Six Hundred Men of the *Philistines*, and thereby delivered *Israel* from evil Neighbours on that side also, the Land (that is, the People of *Israel*, Land being put, by a Metonymy, for the Inhabitants thereof) had rest Four-score Years. Which number of Years, as well as the Forty Years assigned before to *Othniel*, have troubled *Chronologers* to calculate: and of them divers go divers ways. I, not designing to labour on that Subject, as not holding it essential to my present Undertaking, taking (for the most part) the Years as I find them in the Text, proceed with the History.

In so long a time of Liberty and Ease, *Israel* forgot their former Bondage; and making an ill use of so great a Mercy, they did Evil again in the sight of the Lord: who therefore sold them again for their Correction and Amendment, into the Hands of *Jabin*; who assuming to himself the Title of King of *Canaan*, reigned then in *Hazor*.

This *Jabin* seems to have been a strong and powerful Prince: for he had Nine Hundred Chariots of Iron. And doubtless he was a cruel Scourge to *Israel*: for he mightily oppressed them Twenty Years *Judg. 4.* together. Thus as their Sins grew greater, their Servitude was made longer: from Eight to Eighteen Years, before; and now, to Twenty. During which time they were so sharply dealt with, that they durst not travel the common Roads, upon their ordinary Occasions of Commerce and

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Judg. 4. and Trading : but were fain to seek out By-ways, to avoid their Enemies ; so that the Highways were *disused*. Neither could they, with Safety, dwell in their Villages ; being assaulted by their Enemies *Archers*, if they went but to draw Water. And besides, they were not suffered to keep any Arms, if it were known that they had any ; but what Arms they had they were fain to hide : so that there was *not a Sword or Spear seen among Forty Thousand in Israel* ; so servile was their *Thralldom*.

But still the Lord, in the midst of his *Judgments*, remembered *Mercy* : and when his People, brought, through *Suffering*, to a *Sense* of their Sins, cried unto him, he found means to work *Deliverance* for them ; And that at this time, after this manner.

There dwelt in *Israel* a Prophetess, whose Name was *Deborah*, the Wife of *Lapidoth* ; and she is said to have *judged Israel* at that Time : and the Children of *Israel* were wont to come to her for *Judgment*. By which it appears, that God (who is elsewhere said to be no *Respecter of Persons*, *Acts* 10. 34.) is not so great a *Respecter of Sexes*, as some think him : but that he can give *Judgment* to his People, tho' *Male* or *Female*, as it pleaseth him. For since *the Judgment is God's* (*Deut.* 1. 17.) it ought to be received as such ; whatever the *Instrument* be, through which it is conveyed.

To this good *Prophetess* the Lord appeared ; and by his Spirit directed her, to send for *Barak*, the Son of *Abinoam*, a brave young Prince of the Tribe of *Naphtali*. He being come, she acquainted him with the Lord's Command, That he should go, and draw together *Ten Thousand Men*, of the Tribes of *Naphtali* and *Zebulun*, and lead them towards *Mount Tabor*.

This was an hazardous Undertaking for *Barak* : therefore to encourage him, she (speaking in the Name and Place of God) said, *I will cause Sisera, the Captain General of Jabin's Army, to come forth against thee to the River Kishon, with his Chariots, and his Multitude, and I will deliver him into thine Hand.*

Barak, considering the greatness of the *Enterprize*, and holding it necessary to have the *Prophetess* with him (both for *Counsel* to himself on all occasions, and for *Encouragement* to his Men) told her, *If she would go with him, he would ; else not.* She readily replied, *I will surely go with thee ;* but withal pleasantly told him, *This Expedition would not be for his Honour : for the Lord would sell Sisera into the Hand of a Woman.* Then departing together to *Kadesh*, where *Barak* lived, he quickly *listed Ten Thousand Volunteers*, out of *Zebulun* and *Naphtali* ; and led them to *Mount Tabor*, the *Prophetess* accompanying him.

Notice of this *Insurrection* was soon given to *Sisera* ; who thereupon gathering together his *Nine Hundred Chariots* of Iron, and all his People that were with him, which made a very great Host, drew them down to the *River Kishon*.

Which when the *Courageous Prophetess* saw, her Spirit being Divinely guided, she gave the Signal to the Battel, by saying to *Barak*, *Up ; for this is the Day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine Hand. And is not* (added she) *the Lord gone out before thee ?*

With that *Barak* drew forth his Men, and marching down from *Mount Tabor*, joyned the Battel with *Sisera*. And the LORD discomfited *Sisera*, with all his Host, before *Barak*. For the *Elements* were stirred up against the *Canaanites* ; so that they fought from Heaven ; the Stars in their Courses fought against *Sisera*, pouring down *Storms of Rain and Hail*, with furious *Winds* upon them ; and the *River Kishon* swept them away.

Nor

Nor did *Barak's* Sword spare any: but like *Lightning* (as his Name imports) he Flew amongst them; and having put them to the Rout, followed close upon the Pursuit, not suffering any to escape. Only *Sisera*, King *Jabin's* General, not finding Safety in his Chariot, leaped down, and betaking himself to his Heels, avoided *Barak's* Sword, to die an *Inglorious* Death. Which thus happened.

Judg. 4.
A. M.
2553.

Heber, the *Kenite* (who was of the Posterity of *Hobab*, otherwise called *Jethro*, the Father-in-law of *Moses*, and whose People went up with the Children of *Judah*, to dwell amongst them. *Judg.* 1. 16.) had removed his Family from the rest of the *Kenites*, and pitched his Tent unto the Plain of *Zaanaim*, not far from *Kadesh*, where *Barak* lived.

These *Kenites*, tho' being *Proselytes*, they worshipped the true God, according to the *Mosaick* way: yet being Strangers by Birth, and not of the Promised Seed, and so not pretending a Right, or Title to the Land of *Canaan*; they held it best Policy, in those troublesome Times, to observe a *Neutrality*, and maintain Peace, as much as might be, with both the *Israelites* and the *Canaanites*.

Upon this Foot it was, that there was a Peace between King *Jabin*, and the House of *Heber* the *Kenite*. And that gave Confidence to *Sisera*, now in Distress, and put to his Shifts, to betake himself, in his Flight, to the Tent of *Jael*, *Heber's* Wife, for Refuge.

She, seeing him coming, went out to meet him, and invited him to come in without Fear. And he, glad of the Invitation; and not suspecting Danger from her, whose Husband was his Master's *Allie*, went confidently in. And being through the Heat and Toyl of the Day, extremely Thirsty, entreated her in the first place, to give him a little Water to Drink: instead of which, she, opening a Bottle, gave him his fill of Milk, or, as some think of Butter-milk.

Having with this allay'd his Thirst, he desired her to stand in the Door of the Tent; directing her, that if any Body should come to ask if he were there, she, should say, No. Thus he instructed her to deceive others; who her self, mean while, was contriving how to deceive him.

Now thinking himself secure, he laid himself down upon the Floor; and she spread a Coverlet over him. But long he had not lain, e'er through much weariness, he fell fast asleep. Which when she perceived, she took a Hammer in her Right Hand, and a long Nail (or Stake of the Tent) in her left; and pitching it upon the Temples of his Head, smote upon it with that Strength and Force, that she drove it clear through his Head, and fastened it into the Ground: and having him at that Advantage, she smote off his Head, and so left him.

Then going to the Door of the Tent, to see whom she could find, to impart the good News unto, she soon perceived *Barak* himself coming, upon the Pursuit after *Sisera*. Glad of the Occasion, she went out to meet him: and inviting him in, told him, she would shew him the Man he sought after. He thereupon following her in, saw *Sisera* there lying Dead on the Floor, with the Nail in his Temples.

By this means God subdued *Jabin*, King of *Canaan*, before the Children of *Israel*: who thenceforward went on prevailing against him, until they had destroyed him.

The Victory thus obtained, and *Israel's* Deliverance thereby accomplished: the Noble *Deborah* and Valiant *Barak* meeting, sang an Heroic *Epinicium*, or Triumphant Song of Praise, unto the Almighty. Which read in Chapter Fifth.

A Time of Rest succeeded now, within the Compass of which the Story of *Ruth* is generally, and with good Probability, supposed to fall: but the Rise and Occasion thereof must be sought a little higher.

T H E
B O O K
O F
R U T H.

IN the Days when the *Judges* Ruled, there was a Famine in *Ruth. 1.*
the Land, which caused an *Israelite*, of *Beth-lehem-Judah*, *A. M.*
whose Name was *Elimelech*, to remove with *Naomi* his Wife and *2708.*
his Two Sons, *Mablon*, and *Chilion*; and go to sojourn in the
Land of *Moab*.

Long they had not been there, before *Elimelech* himself died.
After which, *Mablon* and *Chilion*, not duly observing the Law
of God, took each of them a Wife, of the Women of *Moab*: the Name
of *Chilion's* Wife being *Orpah*; and the Name of *Mablon's*, *Ruth*.

After they had dwelt there about *Ten Years*, both *Mablon* and *Chilion*
died also; and poor *Naomi* was left in a strange Country, bereft of both
Husband and Children: having only her two Daughters-in-law with
her; *Three Widows* in one Family. Wherefore being weary of staying
in a Place, where she had lost the chief outward Comforts of her Life;
and having heard that *the Lord* had visited his People in giving them
Bread (so that the *Famine* was over in *Israel*;) she set forward to re-
turn to the Land of *Judah*; her Two Daughters-in-law accompaying
her.

Being on the way, she considered that, tho' she was going to her
own Country, her Daughters were going from theirs. Wherefore in
Kindness to them, she advised them to go back; and return each
of them to her Mother's House. And to shew that it was for their Sakes,
not out of any Dislike to their Company, that she was willing to part
with them; she bestowed a kind and Motherly Blessing upon them,
saying, *The Lord deal kindly with you: as ye have dealt with my*
Sons, your Husbands, who are dead, and with me. The Lord grant you
(added she) *that ye may find rest each of you in the House of her Husband*
(that is, that ye may marry again to your content, and enjoy a happy
Settlement.) Then kissing them, as taking her leave of them, they
could no longer contain; but lifting up their Voices, they wept: and
assured her, they could not so part with her, but would accompany
her, now that she returned to her People.

She using many Arguments to perswade them to go back (the chief
whereof was, That they might Marry again, if they staid in their own
Country; which they were not likely to do, if they went with her:) At
length

Ruth 1. length her *Importunity* prevailed upon *Orpah*; who, with *Tears*, taking leave of her Mother-in-law, turned back to *Moab*.

But no persuasion would prevail on *Ruth*; who, with a steady Resolution, persisted in her Purpose of cleaving fast to her Mother-in-law. And to stop her Mother, from pressing her any further upon that Subject, she said unto her; *Intreat me not to leave thee: for whither thou goest, I will go: and where thou dost rest, (or settle,) I will rest: thy People shall be my People, and thy God, my God: where thou diest, I will die; and there will I be buried: God forbid that any thing but Death, should part thee and me.*

A. M. 2718. When *Naomi* perceived, that her Daughter *Ruth* was stedfastly bent to go with her, and had also a purpose to cleave unto the God of *Israel*, she forbore pressing her further: and on they Two travelled together, till they came to *Beth-lehem*.

When they were come thither, where *Naomi* with her Husband *Elimelech*, had formerly lived in good Fashion, as Persons of Note, her Return was generally taken notice of: And her old Neighbours, remembering her, though she had been absent so many Years, came to welcome her home; and congratulate her Return.

But when she heard them mention her Name (*Naomi*) which signifies *Beautiful*, or *Pleasant*; she cried out in the sense of her Affliction, *O, call me not Naomi: call me Mara, (which signifies Bitter) for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full; having an Husband, and Two Sons: But the Lord hath brought me home again Empty; having now neither Husband, nor Son.*

Ruth 2. It was in the beginning of *Barley-Harvest* (which usually was in the First Month with them) when *Naomi* returned to *Beth-lehem*. And *Ruth* the *Moabitess* tho' poor, yet industrious, and willing to get something towards a Livelihood, desired *Naomi* to let her go into the Field, to lease or glean Ears of Corn, where they would suffer her. Her Mother consenting, she went; and happened to light into a Field belonging to one *Boaz*, a very wealthy Man, of the Family of *Elimelech*, and near of kin to him, and there she gleaned after the Reapers.

She had not been long there, ere *Boaz* himself came into the Field, to look after his Workmen. And having saluted them (not with some *Airy Jest*, *Frothy Flout*, or *Sharp Taunt*, as too many now-a-days are apt to do, but) in a very Solemn and Religious manner (which they, in like sort, returned to him) he took notice of *Ruth*; and asked his *Bayliff*, whose *Damsel* she was: she told him, he was the *Moabitish Damsel*, that accompanied *Naomi*, when she came back out of the Country of *Moab*; and that she had asked leave to glean after the Reapers. Whereupon *Boaz*, directing his Speech particularly to her, encouraged her to continue leasing in his Fields, and not go any whither else; but keep with his *Maidens*, into what Field soever they went: and to drink with his Servants, when she was a-thirst; letting her know, he had charged his Servants, that they should not molest her.

Poor *Ruth*, overcome with this unexpected Kindness, bowed her self before him; and could not but express the thankful sense she had of his *Courtesy*, in that he would take so much notice of her, who was a meer *Stranger*.

But *Boaz* let her know, that he had received a full Account of her, and of her kind and handsome Carriage towards her Mother-in-law, since the Death of her Husband; how affectionately she had cleaved to her Mother-in-law, and leaving her own Father and Mother, and the Land of her Nativity, was come unto a People whom she had no knowledge

ledge of before ; and that out of a *Pious Design*, to be under the *Protection and Care of the God of Israel*; whom therefore he solemnly *Ruth* 2. besought to *recompence her Work*, and give her a full Reward.

When Meal-time came, *Boaz* invited her to come and eat with his Reapers ; and he gave her of his Provisions more than she could eat. And when she went again to Leasing, he ordered his Servants, not only to let her glean among the Sheaves, without Reproof ; but to let fall also some handfuls of Corn on purpose, to make her Leasing the better. Thus she gleaned in the Field until Evening ; and when she had beaten out her Corn, she had got about an *Epab* of Barley : which (according to *Godwyn's Moses and Aaron, lib. 6. c. 9.*) is half a Bushel and a Pottle.

This she carried home to her Mother *Naomi* ; who rejoycing to see she had sped so well, asked her where she had gleaned that Day. And when she understood, the Man that had been so kind to her was *Boaz* ; she told her Daughter, he was of Kin to them, one of their near Kinsmen : and wished the Blessing of God upon him, for that he had not left off his Kindness, either to them who were still living ; or to the Memory of their Husbands, who were dead.

Thus *Ruth*, with *Boaz* his Leave, keeping near unto his *Maidens*, went on gleaning in his Fields, until both Barley and Wheat-Harvest was over : yet dwelt still with her Mother-in-law *Naomi*.

But when Harvest was ended, *Naomi* studious how she might recompence the *Affectionate Kindness* of her Daughter-in-law, to her, and knowing by Experience the *Comforts of a Married Life* ; began to project, how she might engage *Boaz* to marry *Ruth* : to whom she reckoned she of Right belonged, according to the Law of God, for raising up the Name of a deceased Brother. *Ruth* 3.

Wherefore having before acquainted *Ruth* that *Boaz* was her near Kinsman ; and informed her what the Law of *Moses* required in that Case : she advised her to wash and anoint her self (which in those hot sweating Countries, and in her Employment, was not unneedful,) and putting on her best Clothes, go down to *Boaz* his Barn, where he was winnowing his Barley ; but by no means let it be known she was there, until he had supped, and was gone to bed. Instructing her also, what she should then do further : which seemed not very fit for an old Woman to contrive ; and less for a young one to put in practice.

However *Ruth*, resolving to follow her Mother's direction, went down to the Barn, and placing her self, where, unseen, she could see ; she observed that *Boaz*, after he had eaten and drank, and his Heart was merry, went and laid himself down at the end of the Heap of Corn : then waiting a while, till he was got to sleep ; She came softly, and lifting up the Clothes, undiscovered, laid her self down (as modestly as the Case would admit) at his Feet.

About Midnight he waking, and feeling some Body at his Feet, was frightened ; and catching hold, perceived it was a Woman : wherefore he called out, *Who art thou ?* To which she answered, *I am Ruth, thine Handmaid. Spread therefore thy Skirt (or Wing) over thine Handmaid : for thou art a near Kinsman.* Which was in effect as if she had said, *Take me to Wife as the Law directs.* For the Phrase of spreading the Skirt, or Wing, over one, imports a taking such an one into Protection. And because it is a part of an Husband to protect and defend his Wife from Injuries, therefore to spread the Wing or Skirt over one, is used for a Periphrasis of Marriage.

Boaz, from the Account he had received concerning *Ruth*, must needs know, both that her Husband *Mablon* was near of kin to him ; and what the Law required in that Case. But being himself

Ruth 3.

pretty far in Years, and *Ruth* a fair young Dame, he might question perhaps, whether if he should have made the Offer, she would have accepted of an Old Man. But now that she made the first Motion, he was so far from rejecting her, on the Score of *Forwardness*, that he commended her for it; Saying, *Blessed be thou of the Lord, my Daughter. For thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end, than at the Beginning; inasmuch as thou followedst not Young Men, whether Poor or Rich.*

He took it (it seems) for a Token of singular Kindness to her former Husband, as well of Devotion to the Religion she was now converted to; that she would choose to marry her Husband's Kinsman, thereby to keep up her Deceased Husband's Name and Family, in observance of the Law of God: tho' that Kinsman was old, in comparison of her, who was young and fresh; rather than to please her Eye with some young spruce Fellow. And therefore he bid her assure her self, he would not fail to answer her Desire and his Duty: which he had the greater Inducement to, because she had the general Reputation of a virtuous Woman, amongst all the People in the City.

Yet withal he told her, that altho' he was indeed a near Kinsman, yet there was another nearer: To whom he must be just, in giving him the Preference, which was his Right. But that he would speak with him about it next Morning; and then if that Kinsman would do the Duty of a Kinsman to her (that is, Marry her) he might: otherwise he himself would assuredly do it; and therefore he bid her lie still till Morning.

She did so: yet got up before it was light, that she might get off undiscovered. For both he and she had a great Regard to their Reputation, and the Honour of their Religious Profession. And therefore he had desired her to take care that it might not be known a Woman had come, into that Place where he lay.

Yet before he let her go, he bid her come and hold up her Apron; and he put Six Measures of Barley into it, that she might not go empty to her Mother-in-law.

Ruth 4.

Thus laden, she returned to *Naomi*, and gave her an Account of the whole Proceeding. Which when *Naomi* had heard, she said to *Ruth*, *Be still my Daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the Man will not be at rest, until he hath finished the thing this Day.*

And so it proved. For in the Morning *Boaz* came up to the Gate of *Beth-lehem*; and sitting down there, soon saw that Kinsman, whom he had spoken of to *Ruth*, coming by. Wherefore calling him to him, he desired him to sit down by him: which he did. Then taking Ten other Men, of the Elders of the City (whom also he desired to sit down by them,) he before them acquainted that other Kinsman, That *Naomi*, who was come back out of the Country of *Moab*, had a Parcel of Land to sell, which had been their Brother *Elimelech's*: whereof he gave him this publick Notice, that he might redeem it, if he pleased; the Right of Redemption belonging, in the first place, to him. But inasmuch as there was none else to redeem it, but they two; he willed him to declare himself, that he might consider what he had to do, in case the other refused it.

That other Kinsman presently answered, *I will redeem it.* But when *Boaz* had told him, that at the same time when he redeemed the Land, he must also take *Ruth* the *Moabite's* to be his Wife, to raise up the Name of the Dead upon his Inheritance: that other Kinsman, changing his Note, said, *I cannot redeem it* (on those Terms) *for my self; lest I destroy mine own Inheritance.* Therefore, said he, to *Boaz*, *Redeem thou my Right to thy self: for (if that be the Condition) I cannot redeem it.*

The

The Reason thereof seems to be, that forasmuch as by the Law, (Deut. 25. 6.) the First-born of such a Marriage was to bear the Name of the Woman's former Husband that was dead, to *keep up his Name* in *Israel*; if that Kinsman had married *Ruth*, and should have had but *one Son only* by her, that Son not being to bear his Name, but the Name of her former Husband; he himself should have had no Son to keep up his own Name in *Israel*: and so his Inheritance might have been lost from his Name, by passing into another Name and Family; which he was not willing to hazard.

But *Boaz* was content to run that *Venture*. And the manner, or Custom in *Israel* then being to confirm Bargains, Sales, Exchanges and Alienations, by the Ceremony of *plucking off the Shoe of him, that did relinquish, or transfer his Right*: the Kinsman, as a Token that he passed his Right of Redemption to *Boaz*, *Put off his Shoe*, (or as some think, suffered *Ruth* to pluck it off, according to Deut. 25. 9.) Whereupon *Boaz* said to the Elders, and to all the People that were present, *Ye are my Witnesses this Day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's of the Hand of Naomi. Moreover, Ruth the Moabitefs, have I purchased, (said he) to be my Wife, to raise up the Name of the Dead upon his Inheritance; that the Name of the Dead be not cut off from among his Brethren: ye, I say, are my Witnesses this Day.* Whereupon all the People that were in the Gate (the Place of Concourse and publick Passage) and the Elders of the City, answered, *We are Witnesses.*

Nor were they *Witnesses only*, but *Well-wishers also*: for they added, *The Lord make the Woman which is come into thine House, like Rachel and like Leah; which Two did build the House of Israel. And do thou, Boaz, worthily in Ephrath, and be famous in Beth-lehem (that is) Prosper and Encrease thy Substance, that thy Name may be noted all over the City. And may thy House be like the House of Pharez (whom Tamar bare unto Judah) of the Seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young Woman.* By which Reference to *Pharez* (the Issue of that Incestuous Congress) respect probably was had to the Signification of his Name, which speaks, *A breaking forth*: whereby they wish, that the Offspring of *Boaz* by *Ruth* may be numerous; and may break forth, and spread themselves far and wide in *Israel*.

Thus *Boaz* took *Ruth* to be his Wife, without either Ring or Priest; and when he went in unto her, the Lord gave her Conception, and she bare a Son: Which good old *Naomi* took and nursed; and the Women her Neighbours named it *Obed*, (which signifies a *Servant*) perhaps to intimate, that he should in time be serviceable and helpful to his Grandmother and Mother.

This *Obed* was the Father of *Jesse*, and Grandfather of King *David*; of whom, according to the Flesh, came our Lord Jesus Christ, who as he was appointed to be the Common Saviour of Mankind: So he condescended to come through *Pharez* (begotten in Incest) through *Rahab* (called, the Harlot) and through *Ruth* (the *Moabitefs*) that All of all Sorts might lay claim unto him, and to the Common Salvation obtained by him for All.

The End of the Book of RUTH.

Now



Now follows the rest of the

B O O K

O F

J U D G E S.

WE observed before, that this Story of *Ruth* is *Judg. 6.* held to have fallen within the time of those *Forty Years* of Rest, which *Israel* is said to have had under the Rule of *Deborah* and *Barak*. To which now looking back, we find, that after they were Dead, the Children of *Israel*, grown through *Peace* and *Plenty* wanton, did *Evil* again in the Sight of the Lord: by which afresh provoked, he subjected them to the Power of *Midian*, to be chastised for *Seven Years*.

Tho' this Bondage was for a *shorter* time than the former: yet it was *very sharp* upon them. So that the Children of *Israel* were fain to *betake themselves to Dens in the Mountains, and Caves in the Earth, and to strong Holds*: and yet even so, could not secure themselves. For they were forced to come out to sow the Land, that they might have *Sustenance*. But when they had sown, and the Corn was come up; then came the *Midianites*, and the *Amalekites*, and the *People* of the *East*, not only for *Forrage*: but bringing with them their *Tents* and their *Cattel*, in very great Numbers, they encamped against *Israel*, until they had *destroyed* all the *Crop* and *Encrease* of the *Earth*; leaving the poor *Israelites* neither Corn nor *Cattel* to live upon, but sweeping all away. And thus they did from Year to Year, till *Israel* was thereby so greatly *impoverished*, that, in the *Sense* of their *Misery*, they cried unto the Lord for Help.

But before the Lord would give them Ease, he sent a *Prophet* unto them. Of whom we have neither the Name, nor any further Account, but that he said unto them, *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the House of Bondage; and I delivered you out of the Hand of the Egyptians, and out of the Hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from before you, and gave you their Land, and I said unto you, I am the Lord your God; fear not the Gods of the Amorites, in whose Land you dwell: but ye have not obeyed my Voice.*

By this *Exposition* he brought them to a *Sense* of their *Transgression*, and of the *Justness* of the *Punishment* they lay under; that they might be the more *truly humbled* under his Hand, and the fitter for *Deliverance*: which he intended to work for them by *Gideon*, the Son of *Joash* the *Abiezrite*.

Judg. 6.
A. M.
2760. Very busy was Gideon in threshing Wheat, that he might hide it from the Midianites; little thinking that he must so suddenly exchange his Flail for a Sword: when the Angel of the Lord appearing to him, said, *The Lord is with thee, thou mighty Man of Valour.*

This unexpected Salutation startled Gideon. Who thereupon, taking Occasion to bemoan the Condition of his People, made Answer, *Oh, my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where are all his Miracles, which our Fore-fathers have told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up out of Egypt? but now, alas! the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the Hands of the Midianites: And dost thou say, the Lord is with me?*

The Lord then looking upon him (with a strengthening Eye) said, *Go in this thy Might; and thou shalt save Israel from the Hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?*

But poor Gideon, looking at his own Weakness, and not yet knowing who it was that spake to him, replied, *Oh, my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel (or what Capacity am I in to save Israel?) seeing my Family is but poor in the Tribe of Manassah; and I am the least in the Family?* The Lord then, to encourage him, said, *Surely, I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites, tho' they are so numerous, with as much Ease as if they were but One Man.*

This raised Gideon's Attention higher, to consider who it was that talked with him. Whereupon he said, *If now I have found Favour in thy Sight, vouchsafe to shew me a Sign; whereby I may know, that it is thou, the Lord, that talkest with me. Wherefore, depart not hence, I pray thee, till I come again; and bring forth my Present (or Meat-offering) and set it before thee.*

The Angel promising to tarry till he came, Gideon went in, and making ready a Kid, and some Unleavened Cakes, brought them forth, and presented them before him, under the Oak where he sat. And having, by the Angel's Direction, laid the Flesh and the Cakes upon the Rock, and poured out the Broth; the Angel of the Lord put forth the end of the Staff that was in his Hand, and touched the Flesh and the Cakes: whereupon Fire rose up out of the Rock, and consumed them; and then the Angel disappeared. Gideon by this perceiving that it was an Angel of the Lord, cried out, *Alas! O Lord God: for I have seen an Angel of the Lord face to face; which was held a fatal thing. But the Lord, to confirm and comfort him, said, Peace be unto thee: fear not, thou shalt not die. Gideon hereupon, in thankful Remembrance of the Lord's Goodness to him, built an Altar there unto the Lord, and called it Jehovah-Shalom; that is, The Lord of Peace, or The Lord send Peace.*

Hitherto the Lord had appeared to Gideon in such a manner, as was perceptible to his outward Senses, to confirm and strengthen him for the Work he had to imploy him in; which now he began to put him upon. For the same Night, the Lord commanded him to throw down the Altar of Baal, which in those corrupt times had been set up; and to cut down the Grove that was by it: and to build an Altar to the Lord his God upon the Top of the Rock; and take his Father's Second Bullock, which was Seven Years Old, and offer it for a Burnt-Sacrifice, with the Wood of the Grove which he was to cut down.

This Bullock is thought to be called the Second, from the Stall it stood and was fed in; which was the Second in order of Place. And being as many Years old, as their Subjection to Midian was, the destroying this Bullock might, in some sort, prefigure the breaking the Midianitish Yoke from off the Neck of Israel, by Gideon; whose Name sounds A Breaker, or Destroyer.

Gideon

Gideon resolving to obey God, began to cast in his mind, which way he might accomplish the Work. And doubting he should meet with *Judg. 6.* *Opposition* and *Hindrance*, if he should attempt to do it in the *Day-time*; he concluded to do it in the *Night*: and accordingly taking *Ten Men* of his *Servants* to assist him, he performed it fully, as the Lord had bidden him.

But what a *Stir* was there, in the Morning, among the Men of the City; when, as soon as they were up, they found the *Altar of Baal* cast down, the *Grove* cut down that was by it, and a *new Altar* built, and the *choice Bullock* offered upon it! They hunt about, sift and examin, to find out the *Author* of this bold *Action*: and at length fastening it upon Gideon, they require his Father *Joash* to bring him forth, that they may put him to *Death* for it.

Joash being a Man of *Power* amongst his People, and well satisfied with what his Son had done, stood up boldly in his Defence; and expostulating the Matter closely with his Fellow-Citizens, those *Baalitish Bigots*, Will ye, (said he) plead for Baal? Will ye serve him? Ye talk of putting my Son to Death for throwing down his Altar: but I say, He that will plead for Baal let him be put to Death, while it is yet Morning. If he be a God, let him plead for himself, against him that has thrown down his Altar. And upon this occasion, he called his Son Gideon, *Jerub-baal*: as much as to say, Let Baal avenge; or Let the Idol overcome.

Though *Joash* thus answered the Men of his City, and stopt their Mouths: yet the matter did not stop there. The *Midianites* and the *Amalekites*, with the other *Eastern People*, gathering themselves together, came over and pitched in the Valley of *Jezreel*: not only, as at other times, to ravage the Country; but probably to avenge the Injury they conceived done to Baal, the General God of the Heathen.

Now did the Lord more eminently appear: for the Spirit of the Lord clothed Gideon; it so came upon him as to cover him. And he, in the Strength thereof blowing a Trumpet, all those of his Family, the *Abiezrites*, came in quickly to him. Then sending Messengers throughout the Tribe of *Manasseh*, and to the Tribes of *Asher*, *Zebulun* and *Naphtali*, they flocked in so fast unto him, that in a little time he had a pretty Army of *Two and Thirty Thousand Men*. But this was but an *Handful*, in comparison of the great Host of the Enemies; which consisted of one Hundred Thirty and Five Thousand Men.

Gideon therefore, seeing the Disparity of their Forces, and having never before been exercised in this manner; besought the Lord to give him a Sign or Token, for a Confirmation to him and his Men, that he would save Israel by his Hand.

The Sign he proposed was, That he laying a Fleece of Wool in the Floor, the Dew should be upon the Fleece only, and the Earth round about should be dry. The Lord condescended: and Gideon, having laid down his Fleece over Night, found the Ground about it Dry in the Morning; and the Fleece so full of Dew, that he wrung a Bowl full of Water out of it.

To encourage and hearten his Men, and remove out of their Minds all Suspicion of Art or Contrivance, Gideon asked leave of God, that he might make Tiyal by his Fleece once more; inverting the Order: so that the Token of good Success now should be, that the Fleece should be Dry, and the Ground Dewy. To which the Lord graciously yielded; and the Fleece being laid the next Night again, was found Dry in the Morning: But the Ground, round about it, had Dew upon it.

Thus

Judg. 7. Thus by a *Two-fold* Miracle confirm'd, *Gideon* resolv'd to give Battle to the *Midianites*; and in order thereunto drew up his Army beside the Well of *Harod*, having the Enemy on the North side of him, in the Valley, by the Hill of *Moreh*.

But as *Gideon* before thought his Forces too few: God now thought them too many; and that, if he delivered the *Midianites* into their Hands (as he intended to do) *Israel* might be apt to vaunt themselves against him, and attribute their Deliverance to their own Strength. Therefore he ordered *Gideon* to make Proclamation throughout the Camp, that whosoever was afraid, should have liberty to depart and return home. And upon that, there marched off *Two and Twenty Thousand* at once: so that *Gideon* had but *Ten Thousand Men* left with him. And yet the Lord held these *too many* still. For he was resolv'd now to order the Matter so, that *Israel's* Deliverance should evidently appear to be wholly of the Lord, not of Man.

Therefore he bid *Gideon* bring his Soldiers down unto the Water. And as *Gideon* had before ask'd Sign upon Sign, he would now, without asking, give him a Sign, whereby he should distinguish, and know which of them should go with him; and which should not. They that took up Water in their Hand, and lapped it like a Dog, should go with him: but they that kneeled down to drink, should be disbanded.

When it came to the Tryal, *Nine Thousand and seven Hundred* of the *Ten Thousand*, kneeled down to drink: so that *Gideon* had but *Three Hundred* left to go with him. And yet by those *Three Hundred Men* that lapped, the Lord told him he would save *Israel*, and deliver the *Midianites* into his Hand. Wherefore, at the Lord's Command, he dismissed all the rest of the People; only keeping so many of their Trumpets, that each of his *Three Hundred Men* might have one for himself.

Now had *Gideon* need of strong Faith to his weak Forces: for the same Night the Lord gave him the Word of Command, to go and fall on; telling him he had delivered the *Midianites* into his Hand. Yet considering the Greatness and Difficulty of the Enterprize, he graciously added; *But if thou fear to go down: Go thou first, with Phurah thy Servant; that by hearing what they say among themselves, thy Hands may be strengthened*, and thou be encouraged to go down with thy Men.

Gideon, glad of this Liberty, taking only his Servant with him, went softly down, in the Covert of the Evening, till he came to the utmost Ranks of the Enemy's Army; which lay along in the Valley, like Grasshoppers for Multitude, and their Camels without Number.

Long he had not stood there, ere he heard one of the Enemy's Soldiers, telling his Dream to his Comerade: and thus he begun it. Behold, said he, I dreamed a Dream; and lo, A Cake of Barley-bread tumbled into the Host of Midian, and coming against a Tent smote it, that it fell and over-turned it, that the Tent lay along. His Comerade presently undertaking to expound the Dream, told him, *This Barley-Cake is nothing else, save the Sword of Gideon, the Son of Joash, a Man of Israel: for into his Hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the Host.*

When *Gideon* had heard this Dream, with the Interpretation thereof; he had enough. Wherefore bowing himself in Thankfulness to God; his next care was, how to get back, as he came thither, undiscovered. Which having done, he cheerfully said to his Men, *Arise: For the Lord hath delivered the Host of Midian into your Hand.*

Then dividing his *Three Hundred Men* into *Three Companies*, and giving every Man a Trumpet in one Hand, and a Pitcher, (with a Burning Lamp in it) in the other Hand; he charged them to follow him, and observing his Motion, do just as they should see him do. All

All things now disposed in order, *Gideon* set forward, with One Hundred Men at his Heels; the other Two Companies advancing also, and placing themselves on each side of the Host: And when *Gideon* was come to the *Out-side* of the Camp, he with his Company *blew their Trumpets*, and *brake the Pitchers* that were in their Hands. Which the other Two Companies observing, they forthwith blew their Trumpets also, and brake their Pitchers; and with terrible *shouts* cried out, *The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon*: For that was the Word. Judg. 7.

It was now the beginning of the *middle Watch*, (which dividing the Night, from Six to Six, into Four Watches, as most do) should answer *Ten* at Night with us. But that seems *early*, considering how much time must be spent (after *Gideon* had order to set forward) in his going to the Camp, *staying*, (there to hear the Dream, with its Interpretation) *returning* back again, *disposing* his Men, and *giving* the necessary Orders for the Assault. *Drusius*, on the Place, dividing the Night into *Three Watches* only, supposes this to be called the middle Watch, as being the *middlemost* of the Three. Such a Division running the middle Watch an Hour further, makes the Beginning of it answer our *Eleven* at Night.

Which soever it was, likely it is, that the *Midianitish* Host were in their Tents, and settled to rest, when their *Quarters* were beaten up with this unexpected Alarm; which must needs be not only very *Surprising*, but exceeding *Terrible* to them.

The sudden *Sounding* of so many *Warlike Trumpets*; the *Crashing Noise* of so many *Pitchers*, dashed to Pieces all in a Moment, the *dazling Sight* of so many *Flaming Tapers*, flashing about in a Dark Night, might well strike them with both *Amazement* and *Terror*.

Nor was it a slight or common Policy in *Gideon*, to put a Trumpet in every Man's Hand; by which the *Midianites* might well suppose (according to the Rules of *Military Order*) the *Israelitish* Army to be very great, when they heard so many Trumpets sounding together: and those so disposed, on each side the Camp, that the *Midianites* might apprehend they were surrounded, and inclosed.

But above all, the Lord struck the *Midianites* with Fear, and set them all together by the Ears amongst themselves, throughout the Host: so that rising up in a Fright, they ran and fled, making an horrible Outcry; and *thrust their Swords through one another*.

Which Disorder being observed, the Men of *Israel* gathered together out of *Naphtali*, *Asher*, and all *Manasseh*, and pursued the *Midianites*: for they who before were *afraid to fight*, were now *bold to pursue a flying Enemy*.

Gideon also sent Messengers throughout all Mount *Ephraim*, inviting the *Ephraimites* to come down against the *Midianites*, and possess themselves of the *Fords*; that they might take them in their *Flight* over *Jordan*: which the *Ephraimites* doing, took *Oreb*, and *Zeeb*, Two Princes of the *Midianites*; and having slain them, followed the Pursuit.

Gideon mean while, with his Three Hundred Men, following hard upon the Chase, came weary and faint to *Succoth*; where making a little halt, he entreated the Men of *Succoth* to give his Soldiers some Loaves of Bread, to refresh them, because they were halting in pursuit after *Zebah* and *Zalmunna*, Two of the Kings of *Midian*, who with about Fifteen Thousand Men, were fled to *Karkor*. But the Princes of *Succoth*, considering how strong the *Midianitish* Kings were, in comparison of *Gideon* (they being *Fifteen Thousand*, to his *Three Hundred* tired Men) not only refused to refresh his Soldiers; but in Derision, ask-

ed him, *If the Hands of Zebah and Zalmunna were now in his Hands,*
Judg. 8. that they should relieve his Army?

This Flout Gideon repented so ill, that he told them, *When the Lord hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into my Hand, then will I tear your Flesh with the Thorns of the Wilderness, and with Briers.*

Then marching a little further, to *Penuel*, he made the like Request to the Men of that Place; and received from them the same Answer that he had at *Succoth*. Whereupon he told the Men of *Penuel*, *when I come again in Peace, I will break down this Tower.*

Hopeless now of any Relief, he was fain to lead on his Men, faint and weary as they were, towards *Karkor*; where the Two *Midianitish* Kings, with their rallied Hosts, lay, as they thought, secure.

But he falling suddenly and briskly upon them, smote and discomfited the whole Host. And pursuing the Two Kings, *Zebah* and *Zalmunna*, who fled; he took them, and brought them back with him to *Succoth*.

But before he entred the Town, having caught a young Man of the Place, he made him describe unto him the *Princes* of *Succoth*; who were *Threescore and Seventeen* Men. Then entering the City, and calling the *Princes* before him, he shewed them *Zebah* and *Zalmunna*, his Prisoners, with whom they before had upbraided him: and taking the *Elders* of the City, he chastised them with *Thorns* and *Briers*, as he had before threatened to do; and thereby taught the Men of *Succoth* to behave themselves better for the future. Nor did he spare *Penuel*: but threw down the Tower; and slew the chief Men (or *Governors*) of the City.

Then turning to *Zebah* and *Zalmunna*, he asked them, what manner of Men they were, whom they had slain at *Tabor*; and they telling him they were like him, each of them representing the Child of a King, he replied, *They were my Brethren*, even the Sons of my Mother; Whose Lives if they had saved, he would (he told them) have saved theirs: but now, since they had killed his Brethren, *they must expect no Mercy*. Therefore he bid his Eldest Son *Jether*, rise up and slay them: but he being but a Youth, was somewhat timorous, and not forward to draw his Sword. Which *Zebah* and *Zalmunna* observing, and thinking it better (seeing there was no hopes of Life) to be dispatched quickly by a strong and bold Hand, than to be long a hacking to Death, by a feeble and fearful Hand; desired *Gideon* to fall upon them himself: for as is the Man, (said they) so is his Strength. Whereupon *Gideon* arose and slew them; and took the Ornaments (or Trappings) from off their Camels Necks.

The Men of *Ephraim*, when they had taken and slain *Oreb* and *Zeeb*, Two *Princes* of *Midian*, brought their Heads to *Gideon*, on the other side *Jordan*; to let him see what Service they had done: and withal, began to quarrel with him for his not calling them at the first to the Battel. But he, by magnifying their Service and Success, in what they had done upon the Pursuit; and preferring their Performances to his own; wisely pacified them; and so prevented further Mischief.

The Strength of *Midian* thus broken by the Slaughter and Destruction of their whole Host, consisting of an *Hundred Thirty and Five Thousand Men*; a time of Peace and Tranquility ensued to *Israel* for *Forty Years* together. Which Period yet is by many reckoned to commence from the end of the *Forty Years* Peace procured by *Deborah* and *Barak*.

And now, so full of Sense were the Men of *Israel* of *Gideon's* Merit, in having wrought so great a Deliverance for them, that they offered to settle the Government on *Gideon*, and make it Hereditary to his Family. Which great Temptation *Gideon* most generously resisted, saying, *I will not rule*

rule over you, neither shall my Son rule over you: but the Lord shall rule over you. Yet to let you see, (said he) that I don't slight your *Judg. 8.* Kindness, I will request one thing of you; and that is, that ye will every one give me the Ear-rings of his Prey. They readily answered, We will willingly give them. And forthwith spreading a Garment, they cast in every Man the Ear-rings of his Prey: which being of Gold (as being taken from the *Ishmaelites*) they came by weight to One Thousand and Seven Hundred Shekels of Gold; besides divers other sorts of Ornaments, and rich Raiment, with the Chains that were upon the Camel's Necks: all which they threw in, over-and-above what was asked.

If the *Shekel of Gold* was in value Fifteen Shillings of English Money, as *Godwyn* computes it (*Moses and Aaron, l. 6. c. 9.*) These one Thousand Seven Hundred Shekels would come to One Thousand Two Hundred Seventy and Five Pounds.

Of this Gold *Gideon* made an *Ephod*, and put it in his City *Ophrah*, with no other Intention (as is generally concluded) but that it might be a Monument of the Victory, obtained by *Israel* over the *Midianites*. But it proved a Snare to the House of *Gideon*; and indeed to the whole House of *Israel*. For after *Gideon* was dead, (who lived to a good old Age, and was buried in the Sepulchre of *Joash* his Father, in his City *Ophrah*) all *Israel* went a Whoring after this *Ephod*, and turned again after *Baalim*, and made *Baal-berith* their God; which was the Idol of the *Shechemites*, amongst whom he had an House or Temple.

A. M.
2760.

Thus the Children of *Israel* remembered not the Lord their God, who had delivered them out of the Hands of all their Enemies on every side: neither shewed they Kindness to the House of *Jerub-Baal* (that is, *Gideon*) according to all the Goodness which he had shewed unto *Israel*.

Their Ingratitude to God, the Author of their Deliverance, is seen in their Forsaking the Lord, and serving strange Gods. Their Ingratitude to *Gideon*, the Instrument of their Deliverance, is evidenced by their killing his Sons, which the sequel of the story relates.

For *Gideon*, by many Wives, had Threescore and Ten Sons; and by a Concubine, he had one Son, whom he Named *Abimelech*. Now tho' *Gideon* had refused the Government of *Israel*, both for himself and for his Sons: Yet when he was Dead, this Bastard *Abimelech*, being a forward Youth, betook himself to his Mother's Kindred at *Shechem*; *Judg. 9.* and suggesting to them, that all his Seventy Brethren would usurp the Government over them, wisht them to consider, which would be better for them, that Seventy Persons should reign over them, or but One: And withal put them in mind, that he was their Bone and their Flesh.

His Mother's Kindred taking this in, as a Project that promised Preferment to them, silyly insinuated it to the Men of *Shechem*: Who, for the same Reason, falling in with it also, contrive how to advance *Abimelech*. And because Money is said to answer all things, they stuck not to give him some of their Sacred Treasure, out of the House of their God *Baal-berith*; wherewith he hired vain and light Persons (dissolute Fellows) to attend him. And with these *Ruffians* speeding to his Father's House at *Ophrah*, he seized on his Brethren, the Sons of *Jerub-Baal*, who were Seventy in Number, and slew them all upon one Stone: except the Youngest, whose Name was *Jotham*; and who escaped that Slaughter, by hiding himself.

The *Shechemites*, now holding themselves safe from any Danger, or Opposition from *Gideon's* House, grew bolder, and gathering themselves together, with all the Forces of *Millo* (or the Fortrefs) set up *Abimelech* for their King. Which when young *Jotham* understood, he

A. M.
2768.

Judg. 9. he went to the Top of Mount-Gerizim, where he might be well both seen and heard, and yet be out of their reach : And from thence with a loud Voice calling unto the *Shechemites*, he said, *Hearken unto me, ye Men of Shechem ; that God may hearken unto you.* By which solemn Address having engaged their Attention, he delivered his mind to them, in this witty and significant *Apologue*.

The Trees (said he) *went forth to anoint a King over them : and the first Choice they made was of the Olive ; to which they offered the Crown, saying, Reign thou over us.* But the *Olive* refused it ; saying, *Should I leave my Fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and Man, and go to be promoted over the Trees ?*

Upon this Refusal of the *Olive*, they tendered the Government to the *Fig-Tree*. But the *Fig-Tree*, not willing to part with its *Sweetness* and good *Fruit*, declined it also.

Thereupon they present it to the *Vine* : but the *Vine*, preferring its delicious *Wine*, to the gaudy *Trouble* of Government, chose to continue in its private and quiet *Estate*.

Hitherto the *Trees* had cast their choice upon the richest, and most reputable of their Company : But having thus been the *Third* time repulsed, they resolved now to make the Offer, where in all likelihood it would not be Rejected. And therefore, with one Consent, they pitch upon the *Bramble*, or *Thistle* ; saying, *Come thou, and Reign over us.*

The *Bramble*, without any Complement, or Ceremony, readily accepted the Offer ; but wisht them to be in earnest : letting them know, what otherwise they must trust to. *If in Truth*, said he, *ye anoint me King over you ; then come, and put your Trust in my Shadow : but if not, Let Fire come out of the Bramble, and devour the Cedars of Lebanon.*

By which apt Parable, having represented to the *Shechemites*, how his Father *Jerub-Baal*, when the Men (not of *Shechem* only, but) of *Israel*, had offered to settle the Government upon him, and his *Posterity in Tail*, did, like the *Olive*, *Fig* and *Vine*, bravely refuse it ; and that they had now cast it upon One, as much inferior in *Virtue*, *Worth* and *Honour*, to *Gideon* and his lawful Sons, as the *Bramble* is to the *Olive*, *Fig-Tree*, or *Vine* : he expostulated the Injury done to his Family, and thus laid their *Ingratitude* before them.

Now therefore, (said he) *if ye have done truly and sincerely, in that ye have made Abimelech King ; and if ye have dealt well with Jerub-Baal and his House, according to what he deserved of you (for my Father fought for you, and adventured his Life to the utmost, and delivered you out of the Hand of Midian ; and yet notwithstanding all that, ye are risen up against my Father's House this Day, and have slain his Sons, so that of Seventy Persons, I only, by Providence, have escaped you : and ye have made Abimelech, the Son of his Handmaid, King over the Men of Shechem ; not for his Virtue, but because he is your Brother.) If, I say, ye have dealt truly and sincerely with Jerub-Baal, and with his House this Day ; then rejoyce ye in Abimelech, and let him rejoyce in you. But if not, then let Fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the Men of Shechem, and the House of Millo : and let Fire come also out of the Men of Shechem, and from the House of Millo, and devour Abimelech.*

When *Jotham* had thus delivered himself, knowing there could be no safety for him any where, within *Abimelech's* reach, he fled to *Beer* ; which some guess to be a Village in the Tribe of *Simeon*. But if *Abimelech* was King over *Israel* at large (as the Text intimates, *ver. 22.*) *Jotham* could hardly have been safe, if known to be in any of the Tribes.

But

But where-ever *Jotham's Sanctuary* was, it was not long ere the Curse, he had denounced upon *Abimelech* and the *Shechemites*, brake *Judg. 9.* forth indeed between them, as a devouring Fire.

For when *Abimelech* had reigned Three Years, God sent an *Evil Spirit* between him and the Men of *Shechem*: by which they were stirred up to deal *treacherously* with him; and he *roughly* with them. And this was brought to pass, that the Cruelty done to the Sons of *Jerub-Baal* might be avenged, and their Blood be laid upon *Abimelech*, their Brother, that slew them; and upon the Men of *Shechem*, who, aided him in the killing of them. Which shews, that *Jotham* did not speak at random.

At first, the *Shechemites* wrought privily against *Abimelech*, appointing some to *lie in wait* for him, on the Top of the Mountains (where he used to resort;) that they might *kill*, or at least *seize on* him. But this *Design* being *discovered* to *Abimelech*, he escaped them. Whereupon they turning *High-way-Men*, robbed all Passengers.

This did not answer the *Shechemites* End. Wherefore they entertained in their Service one *Gaal*, the Son of *Ebed*; who came to *Shechem* with a Band of Men, that were his Brethren, or Kindred: and the Men of *Shechem* put their Confidence in him. And thinking themselves safe under his Conduct, they went out boldly into the Fields, to gather and press their Grapes. And making Songs in Praise of *Gaal*, they went into the House of their God; where they did Eat and Drink, and *Curse Abimelech*.

Puffed up with this popular Breath, *Gaal* began to look and talk big, speaking contemptibly not only of *Abimelech*, but of *Jerub-Baal* also, and wishing the People were wholly at his Command that he might remove *Abimelech*. And turning his Speech (by a Figure called *Apostrophe*) to *Abimelech*, as if he had been present, he like a *Braggadocia*, foolishly cried out, *Increase thine Army, and come forth.*

Zebul was Governor of *Shechem* at that time for *Abimelech*, who having heard *Gaal's* insolent Speeches, and being thoroughly warmed therewith, sent Messengers privately to *Abimelech* (who then dwelt at *Arumah*, otherwise called *Tormah*) and acquainted him that *Gaal*, with his Brethren, being come to *Shechem*, began to fortifie the City against him. Wherefore he advised him to come with his Forces by Night; *and lie in wait* in the Fields; and early in the Morning, when *Gaal* and his Followers should come out, set upon them, and take the City.

Abimelech following *Zebul's* Counsel, came forward with his Men by Night; and disposed them in Four Companies, at such a Distance from the City, that they might not be discerned. And when *Gaal* went out to the City Gate, early in the Morning, *Abimelech* and his Men, being risen up from lying in wait, were coming down towards the City. *Gaal* therefore seeing them move at a distance, told *Zebul* the Governor, that there came People down from the Top of the Mountains. *Zebul* understood it well enough: yet partly to amuse *Gaal*, and partly to deride him, answered, *Thou seest the Shadow of the Mountains, as if they were Men.* *Gaal* would not be so put off: but looking more earnestly, shewed *Zebul* where the People came down; some in one Company, and some in another. *Zebul* seeing them now so near, that there was no danger in owning it, laughed *Gaal* to scorn; asking him, in Derision, *Where's now thy Mouth, wherewith thou saidst, Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him? Is not this the People that thou hast despised? Go out, I pray now and fight with them.* *Gaal* having no other Remedy, led out the Men of *Shechem*, to fight with *Abimelech*; but was

H h h

soon

soon overthrown, put to Flight, and Chased to the Gate: but Zebul
Judg. 9. would not suffer him nor his Men, to enter *Shechem* again.

On the Morrow, others of the City going forth into the Fields, *Abimelech* falling on them, slew them. And when he had fought all Day against the City, he at length took it; and having slain the People that were in it, he beat down the City: and to express his Detestation of it, he sowed it with Salt.

They who were in the *Tower* of *Shechem*, seeing the City thus destroyed, thought themselves hardly safe there; and therefore went into a *Strong-Hold* or Fortrefs, belonging to the House of their God *Eerith*. Which when *Abimelech* understood, he took an *Ax* in his Hand; and bidding all the People that were with him follow him, and do as they saw him do, he went up to Mount *Zalmon*, where grew a Grove of Trees; and cutting down a *Bough*, took it on his Shoulder, and brought it down to the *Hold*. The rest of the People, following his Direction and Example, brought every one his *Bough*, and laying them about the *Hold*, set it on Fire: by which means all the People that were in it, being about a *Thousand* Men and Women, were destroyed.

Lifted up with Success, *Abimelech* went to another City, called *Thebez*: against which he encamped, and took it. But there being a strong *Tower* within the City, the People, both Men and Women, fled generally thither; and shutting themselves in, gat them up to the Top of the *Tower*.

A. M. *Abimelech*, pursuing his own Destruction, came unto the *Tower*,
 2771. and fought against it: but pressing hard unto the Door of the *Tower*, to have set it on fire; a Woman from above cast down a piece of a *Millstone* upon his Head, which brake his *Skull*. He feeling himself mortally wounded, called hastily to his Armour-bearer, and said, Draw thy *Sword* and slay me; that Men say not of me, a Woman slew him: whereupon his Armour-bearer thrust him through, that he died. And when his Army saw that he was Dead, they dispersed themselves.

Thus God rendred the Wickedness of *Abimelech*, which he did to his Father, in slaying his Brethren, upon his own Head. And all the Evil of the Men of *Shechem* did God render upon their Heads also. And upon them both came the Curse of *Jotham*, the Son of *Jerub-Baal*, or *Gideon*.

A. M. This *Abimelech* (no better than he was) is reckoned among the *Judges*;
 2794. and to have ruled *Israel* three Years. After whose Death, *Tola*, a
Judg. 10. *A. M.* Man of *Issachar*, arose to defend *Israel*, and he judged *Israel* Three and
 2816. Twenty Years: and yet nothing is Recorded that he did in that time: to whom succeeded *Fair* a *Gileadite*, who judged *Israel* Two and Twenty Years. And all the Account we have of him is, that he had Thirty Sons, who rode upon Thirty Ass-Colts, to distinguish them from the Common People; and each of them had a City, or Village to himself, which were called, *The Villages of Fair*.

In so long a time, since *Gideon's* Death, great Corruptions were crept in; and the Children of *Israel* did Evil again in the Sight of the Lord: for they served *Baalim* and *Ashtaroth*, and the Gods of *Syria*, and the Gods of *Zidon*, and the Gods of *Moab*, and the Gods of the Children of *Ammon*, and the Gods of the *Philistines*; and they forsook the Lord, and served not him.

This highly provoked the Lord, so that his Anger was hot against *Israel*; and he sold them into the Hands of the *Philistines*, and of the Children of *Ammon*; who vexed and oppressed them Eighteen Years, even all the Children of *Israel* that were on the other side of *Jordan*, in the Land of the *Amorites*, which is in *Gilead*. And in the last Year, the Children of *Ammon* passed over *Jordan*, to fight against *Judab*, and
 against

against Benjamin, and against the House of Ephraim; so that Israel was sore distressed.

Judg. 10.

In this Distress the Children of Israel crying unto the Lord, said, *We have sinned against thee, both in that we have forsaken thee, our God, and also served Baalim.*

The Lord hereupon took occasion to enter into a close *Expostulation* with Israel, recounting to them the many *Deliverances* he had given them; yet (said he) *ye have forsaken me, and served other Gods. Wherefore I will deliver you no more* (that is, unless ye put away your strange Gods, and turn to me with unfeigned Repentance.) And to make them the more sensible of their *Folly*, as well as *Wickedness* in forsaking him, who had so often helped them; and in falling down to such *senseless Stocks*, as could help neither them, nor themselves: he bid them, *Go; cry to the Gods which ye have chosen, and let them, (said he) deliver you in the time of your Tribulation.*

This sharp Reproof pierced the poor *Israelites* to the Heart; so that humbling themselves before the Lord, they said again, *We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; only deliver us, we pray thee, this Day.* Neither did they make Confession only in Words; but in *Practice* reformed: for they put away the Strange Gods from among them, and served the Lord. Whereupon he commiserated the Condition of his People, and appointed means to effect their Deliverance.

There was in that half Tribe of *Manasseh*, which settled on the other side of *Jordan*, a Man of Note amongst his People, whose Name was *Gilead*, of the Posterity of that *Gilead* the Son of *Machir*, unto whom *Moses* gave the City *Gilcad*, *Numb. 32. 4.* from whence that Family were called *Gileadites*.

Judg. 11.

This *Gilead* had divers Sons by his Wife: but he had one Son by an Harlot; whom he named *Jephthah*. And when his Lawful Sons were grown up, they thrust out *Jephthah*; telling him, he should have no Inheritance among them, not being born in Lawful Matrimony. Whereupon *Jephthah* flying from his Brethren, went and dwelt in the Land of *Tob*, (which signifies *Goodness*, as *Jephthah* signifies *opening*;) and being a bold young Man, a Company of vain Fellows flockt to him, and went along with him.

After some time, the Children of *Ammon* making War against *Israel*, the Elders of *Gilead*, wanting a General, and knowing *Jephthah*, to be a Man of great Valour, went to him at *Tob*: and offering him the Command of their Army, desired him to come and be Captain General of their Forces; that under his Conduct they might fight with *Ammon*.

Jephthah surprised with this sudden Change, askt them, *Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my Father's House? and why are ye come to me now, when ye are in Distress?*

They, plainly acknowledging, that it was their Distress that had moved them to come to him, said, *Therefore we turn again to thee now, that thou mayst go with us, and fight against the Children of Ammon, and be our Head over all the Inhabitants of Gilead.*

But said *Jephthah* (willing to be upon sure Terms) *If ye bring me home again, to fight (for you) against the Children of Ammon, and the Lord deliver them before me, shall I be your Head, or chief Ruler afterwards?*

They solemnly engaging that he should; and calling God to Witness upon it: *Jephthah* there upon went with them, and the People made him Head or Captain over them; *Jephthah* repeating the Covenant or Agreement that was made between them, before the Lord in *Mispeh*.

The Government being thus settled upon him, he forthwith sent Messengers to the King of Ammon, to demand the Reason why he was come to make War in his Land. To which the Ammonitish King answered, that *the Land was his*; that Israel when they came up out of Egypt, had taken it away from his People the Ammonites; that therefore he was come to demand, and recover his Right, unless Jephthah would restore it peaceably.

Jephthah hereupon, by Messengers which he sent to him again, opened the whole Matter to him from the beginning, that he might see his Error; shewing him, that Israel took not the Land in question from the Ammonites; nor had indeed any thing to do with them. But that, having, in their Travel from Egypt, desired Passage thro' the Countries of Edom and Moab, and been denied by the King of each; they were forced to fetch a great Compass, till they came to the Land of the Amorites: of whom also they prayed Passage. But Sihon the Amoritish King, not only opposed their Passage, but with all his Forces set upon them. Whereupon it coming to a pitched Battel, the Lord God of Israel delivered Sihon, and all his People, into the Hand of Israel, and they smote them: by which means Israel came to possess all the Land of the Amorites, even whatsoever Sihon was possessed of: and he having before taken from the King of Moab the Land now in question; (Numb. 21. 26.) that fell with the rest, by Conquest from the Amorite to Israel.

Jephthah having thus shewed, that Israel took nothing from Ammon or Moab; but from the Amorites, whom the Lord God of Israel had dispossessed before his People; thus reasons with the Ammonitish King: wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh thy God giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever the Lord our God shall drive out before us, them will we possess.

Then confirming Israel's Title, by a long Prescription of about Three Hundred Years peaceable Enjoyment; he concluded thus; Wherefore I have not sinned against thee; but thou dost wrong me, in making War against me: The Lord, the Judge, be judge this Day, between the Children of Israel and the Children of Ammon.

The Ammonitish King, not yielding to Jephthah's Reasons, but persisting in his Claim: the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah, by which Animated, he marched out against the Children of Ammon; who were ready in Arms to receive him.

But before he joyned Battel with them, he vowed a Vow unto the Lord, saying, If thou shalt without fail deliver the Children of Ammon into my Hands, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth out of the Doors of my House to meet me, when I return in Peace from the Children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, OR, I will offer it up for a Burnt-offering. So I read it, according to the Margin; rather than [And] as it stands in the Text, for Reasons which shall be given by and by.

This Vow thus made for good Success, Jephthah joyned Battel with the Ammonites, and the Lord delivered them into his Hands; so that he smote them with a very great Slaughter, took Twenty Cities from them, and subdued them before the Children of Israel.

After which, returning to his House at Mizpeh, who should be the first that came forth to meet him, but his own only Daughter! who to Congratulate his Victory and safe Return, came out to him with Musick and Dancing; and she was indeed his only Child.

But when he saw her, he rent his Cloaths, and cried out, Alas! my Daughter, thou hast brought me very low; and thy coming (at this time) is a trouble to me: for I have opened my Mouth to the Lord, and I cannot go back.

Well,

Well, My Father, said the Damsel, *forasmuch as the Lord hath taken Vengeance for thee of thine Enemies, the Children of Ammon; if Judg. 11.* thou hast opened thy Mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy Mouth, Only, (added she) grant me this Request, Let me alone (leave me at liberty) Two Months, that I may go up and down upon the Mountains, and bewail my Virginity with my Companions. Which being granted her, she went, and at the end of the Two Months, returned unto her Father, who did with her according to his Vow: and she knew no Man, that is, she never married. And it became a Custom in Israel, that the Daughters of Israel went yearly Four Days in a Year, to discourse with the Daughter of Jephthah.

Jephthah has undergone much Censure from many, and some of great Name, for making this Vow (which they call *Unlawful*) and more, for performing it: upon a Supposition, that he did actually Sacrifice his Daughter; by offering her, as a Burnt-offering, upon the Altar. And indeed had he done so, he must needs have done Evil, and deserved the utmost Blame laid upon him. But it is hard to suppose he could be guilty of so barbarous a Crime: or that if he had been, he should not have gone unpunished, and unreprieved for it, in the holy Text; nor have been extolled, as he was, by the Author to the Hebrews, for his Faith, and, working Righteousness, and ranked with Gideon, Barak, Samuel and David, Heb. 11. 32.

Whether this Vow of Jephthah's was lawful or unlawful, advised or unadvised, is not my business here to dispute. To those who think it was unlawful, I shall only offer to be considered. 1. That the Spirit of the Lord was come upon Jephthah, before he made this Vow. And 2. That as he made the Vow conditional, as a means to engage the Lord to be with him, and to deliver his Enemies into his Hands: so the Lord upon this Vow, was with him, did answer him, and deliver them into his Hands. Which carries in it an Implication at least, if not somewhat more, that the Lord did accept the Vow: which is not fit to be supposed of an unlawful Vow.

They that account it a rash or unadvised Vow, may do well to consider, that the giving a Disjunctive Sense in this Place, to the Conjunctive Particle [*And*] which the Translators have done; whereby, instead of [*AND I will offer it,*] it may be read, (as it is in the Margin) [*OR, I will offer it,*] makes way for a fair Supposition, that in this Vow Jephthah had regard to the fitness of the Subject, or thing vowed for a Burnt-offering. So that if what came forth to meet him, were not fit for Sacrifice, then it should be dedicated or consecrated to the Lord: But if it were a Thing fit for Sacrifice, then it should be offered for a Burnt-offering. Now the Things that were not fit for Sacrifice were Mankind, and unclean Beasts and Birds. But tho' these might not be offered in Sacrifice; yet they might be vowed: and afterwards redeemed with Money (at the valuation of the Priest) or not be redeemed, at the Vower's choice; and if not redeemed, might be sold, as appears by the Law, in Levit. 27.

But whatever the Vow was, that Jephthah did not thereupon put his Daughter to Death; but only consecrated, or devoted her, in an especial manner, to the Service of the Lord, in a continued single Life, is not only the Judgment of very many Learned Men; but seems fairly deducible from the Text. For besides the Unnaturalness and Impiety of making his Daughter a Bloody Sacrifice, contrary to the Law, Levit. 18. 21. (which was not levelled against letting their Children pass thro' the Fire to Molech only; but against letting them pass through the Fire at all: which was the way of the Heathen, whom they were not to fol-

low;) It is observable, that when *Jephthah's* Daughter so readily consent-
Judg. 11. ed to the performance of his Vow upon her, she did not ask time to
 bewail her *Death* (which yet had been most reasonable, if she had
 been to die:) but to bewail her *Virginity*, that she must live and die a
 Virgin; which among the *Israelitish* Women (who all desired and hoped
 to bring forth the *Messiah*) was a very *uneasy*, and *reproachful* thing.
 Again, we may observe, that after she had spent the two Months in
 bewailing her *Virginity*, and her Father, at her return to him, had
 done with her according to his Vow; it immediately follows, *And she*
knew no Man. No sure: how could she, if to perform his Vow, he
 was fain to kill her. But he adding, after the performance of his Vow,
 that *she knew no Man*, implies that his doing with her according to his
 Vow, laid on her a Prohibition, or Restraint from knowing Man, (that
 is, from marrying) as long as she lived. Besides, where we read in
Ver. 40. That the Daughters of *Israel* went Yearly to lament *Jeph-*
thah's Daughter (whence some infer, tho' not *necessarily*, that she was
Dead: for they might as well then lament her *Virgin-life*, as she her
 self had before bewailed it,) the *Margin* has it, to *talk with her*; and so
Pagnine, *Arias Montanus*, and *Tremellius* and *Junius* turn it. From
 which may be very well inferred, That she was *alive*, long after her
 Father had performed his Vow upon her. *Pagnine* and *Montanus* turn
 it, *ad alloquendum*, to *speak to her*. *Tremellius* and *Junius* read it *ad*
confabulandum to *discourse with her*. And *Broughton* is positive, *He did*
not Sacrifice his Daughter: but made her a perpetual Virgin, Consent of
Script. ad an. Mund. 2820. *Tremel.* and *Jun.* give this Reason why he
 did so: *Ideo non passus est eam nubere, ne alterius quam Jehovæ esse*
videretur. i. e. He therefore suffered her not to marry, lest she (whom
 he had consecrated to the Lord,) *should seem to belong to any other than*
the Lord. Annotat. in loc.

Vulg. Err.
Cap. 14. Dr. *Brown*, places the Opinion, that *Jephthah* sacrificed his Daughter,
 amongst the *Vulgar Errors*, which he corrects, and refutes it by Au-
 thority of Scripture and Reason. And *Christopher Ness*, in his late
 Book, entituled, *A Compleat History and Mystery of the Old and New*
Testament, discussing the matter at large, concludes, That *Jephthah*
 did not put his Daughter to Death: but devoted her a consecrated Vir-
 gin to the Lord.

Tho' *Jephthah* had succeeded so well against the *Ammonites*, yet he
 had an *After-reckoning* to make with the *Ephramites*, as *Gideon* had be-
 fore him: and had *harder Work* of it.

Judg. 12. These Men of *Ephraim* seem to have been of a *quarrelsome* Temper,
 and very *Ambitious*. For tho' *Gideon* had called them to the *Pursuit* of
Midian; where they had the *Advantage* of Spoil, and the *Honour* of
 taking *Oreb* and *Zeeb*, two Princes of *Midian*: yet because they were
 not called *at the first* to the *Battel*, they chid sharply with him; but it
 went no further then, than *Words*.

But now it *came to Blows*. For having gathered their Strength toge-
 ther, they came upon *Jephthah*, demanding of him, wherefore he passed
 over to fight against the Children of *Ammon*, and did not call them to go
 with him.

He, it seems, had desired their help; for to pacifie them, he tells
 them, *I and my People were at great Strife with the Children of Ammon;*
and when I called you, ye delivered me not out of their Hands. And when
 I saw that ye delivered me not, I put my Life in my Hands; and passed
 over against the Children of *Ammon*, and the Lord delivered them into
 my Hand. Wherefore then are ye come up this Day to fight against me?

The

The *unreasonable Ephraimites* were so far from being satisfied with this *reasonable Answer*, that they threatned him to *burn his House* *Judg. 12.* over his Head.

Jephthah thereupon gathering together all the Men of *Gilead* in his Defence, gave Battel to *Ephraim*. And the *Gileadites*, being highly provoked by the *Scornful Taunts* of the *Ephraimites*, who called them *Fugitives of Ephraim*, behaved themselves so valiantly, under their *valiant Leader Jephthah*, that they routed the *Ephraimites*, and put them to flight.

Then taking the *Passages of Jordan* (over which those *Ephraimites* that escaped the Battel, must of necessity pass, to get home) when any of them came to desire Passage, they examined him if he were an *Ephraimite*, or not. If he said *Yes*, they put him to the *Sword*. If he said *Nay*, they gave him a *Test*; which was to pronounce the Word *Sibboleth*, which signifies a *Stream*, *Water-course*, or falling of Waters.

But they, whether *surprized* with Fear, or *infatuated*, could not hit it right; but called it *Sibboleth*. The Difference is not great, (an *h*. only, or *Aspiration*;) yet that *little variation* cost them their lives: for every one of them, that did but so *mis-pronounce*, was slain; and there fell at that time of the *Ephraimites*, no fewer than *Two and Forty Thousand*, upon this *ambitious Quarrel*.

Jephthah, thus rid of his both *Foreign* and *Domestick* Foes, held the Government, according to Agreement, during his Life; which was but *Six Years*.

After him, *Ibzan* of *Beth-lehem*, who had *Thirty Sons*, and *Thirty Daughters*, judged *Israel Seven Years*. To whom succeeded *Elon*, a *Zebulonite*, for *Ten Years*. And to him *Abdon* for *Eight Years*. Which last had *Forty Sons*, and *Thirty Nephews* (or *Grandsons*) who rod on *Seventy Ass-colts*. But of these *Three Judges*, no publick Act is Recorded.

Within the time of some of these later Judges, and (as *Broughton* *ad an. mund. 2810.* delivers) about the time of *Jephthah's Victory*, was born *Samson*; the last of those who were accounted the *extraordinary Judges of Israel*; that is, Judges or Deliverers, raised up in an *extraordinary* manner. Others were raised at the time when they were wanted: but this was promised for a Deliverer *before he was born*. And there being many *extraordinary* things, both leading to, and attending his Birth; it is fit we trace the Story, from the first beginning of it.

Samson was the Son of *Manoah* (a Man of *Zorah*, of the Family of the *Danites*;) whose Wife having long been barren, the *Angel* of the Lord appeared unto her, by her self, and told her she should conceive, and bear a Son, who should be a *Nazarite* unto God from his Womb, and should *begin to deliver Israel* out of the Hand of the *Philistines* (into whose Hand the Lord had some time before delivered them for their Transgressions.) Wherefore the *Angel* warned the Woman, that she should take especial care to *abstain* from drinking any *Wine* or *Strong Drink*, and from *eating* any Thing that was *Unclean*. *Judg. 13.*

The Woman, Surprized at this unexpected Message, went and told her Husband, that a *Man of God*, (so she took the Angel to be) came unto her, with a Countenance like that of an Angel of God, very terrible: but, said she, I asked him neither whence he was, neither did he tell me his Name. But he told me I should conceive, and bear a Son; who should be a *Nazarite* to God, from the Womb, to the Day of his Death: and therefore he charged me not to drink *Wine* or *strong Drink*; nor to eat any unclean thing.

Good

Good *Manoah* was not surprized; but (glad that he should have a *Judg. 13.* Son; and more, that that Son should be devoted to God, and should set forward the Deliverance of *Israel* from the Oppression they were under) received the Message in the Faith; not doubting the Performance. Yet fearing lest they might err in the Bringing-up the Child; he piously addressed himself unto the Lord, saying, *O my Lord, Let the Man of God, which thou didst send, come again to us, and teach us what we shall do unto the Child that shall be born.*

This honest Request the Lord Answered; and the *Angel* of God came again to the Woman, as she sat in the Field, her Husband not being with her then neither. But as soon as she saw him, she ran and told her Husband of it; who thereupon went with his Wife to the Place: and having asked, and understood from the Man himself, that it was he that had spoken before to his Wife, he said, *Now let thy Words come to pass; only direct us, how we shall order the Child, and what we shall do unto him.* To whom the *Angel* replied, *Of all that I said unto the Woman, let her beware; She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the Vine, neither let her drink Wine, nor strong Drink, nor eat any Unclean thing: all that I commanded her, let her observe.*

Manoah, not yet suspecting that he was an *Angel*, pressed him to stay till they could make ready a Kid for him. But the *Angel* answered him, *Tho' thou detain me, I will not eat of thy Bread. And if thou wilt offer a Burnt-offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord.* *Manoah*, still taking him for a Man, desired to know his Name, that when what he had told them, should come to pass, they might do him Honour. But the *Angel* put him by; asking him why he enquired his Name, seeing it was secret?

Manoah therefore, without any further Enquiry, took a Kid, with a Meat-offering, and offered it, upon a Rock, unto the Lord; and then the *Angel* discovered himself in a wonderful Manner: for when the Flame went up towards Heaven from off the Altar, the *Angel* of the Lord, in the sight of *Manoah* and his Wife, Ascended in the Flame; and appeared no more to them.

They, by this knowing him to be an *Angel* of the Lord, fell on their Faces to the Ground; and *Manoah* said to his Wife, *We shall surely die: Because we have seen God.* But the Woman wisely answered him, *If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a Burnt-offering and a Meat-offering at our hand: neither would he have shewn us all these things, nor have told us such things as these at this time.*

After this, the Woman, in due time, bare the Promised Son; whom she called *Samson*, from the *Angel's* Appearing the Second time to her: for so the Word is rendred, [*There the Second time.*] And the Lord blessed the Child, so that he grew to wonderful Strength. And while he was but a Youth, the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times (to exert or put forth his Miraculous Strength) in the Camp of Dan, between *Zorah* and *Eshtaol*.

This Camp of Dan was probably that Place, where the Danites pitched, when they went to surprize and take *Laiſh*, (*Judg. 18. 11, 12.*) For it is not at all likely, that the *Philistines* would suffer them to have a standing Camp now, while they had the Rule over them. And this is another Argument, that the Story of *Micah*, and of the Danites Expedition, was transacted before *Samson's* Time; tho' related after.

Judg. 14. When *Samson* was grown to Man's Estate, he took an Occasion to
A. M.
2847. go down to *Timnah*, a City belonging to the *Philistines*; where he saw, and was enamoured with one of the *Philistine's* Daughters. Wherefore
when

when he came home, he told his Father and Mother of her, and desired them to get her for him to Wife. For tho' he let his *Eye wander*, yet *Judg. 14.* he would not break forth so far, as to Marry without the Knowledge and Consent of his Parents.

They (not understanding that the Lord had *permitted* this, that he might thence take Occasion against the *Philistines*, who at that time had Dominion over them) asked him, *If there was never a Woman among the Daughters of his Brethren, or among all the People of Israel; that he went to take a Wife of the Uncircumcised Philistines?* But *Samson*, who, in this Case, consulted more the *Eyes* of his *Body*, than of his *Mind*; desired his Father to get her for him: for (said he) *She is right in mine Eyes*, that is, she pleases me well.

Thus *Samson* drew his *affectionate* Parents down to *Timnah*, to see this *Philistine-Damsel*, and treat with her Parents about Marriage. And as he went (his Parents being either before or behind, but not just with him) a young *Lion* came roaring out of the *Vineyards of Timnah* against him. Whereupon the *Spirit of the Lord* coming mightily upon him, tho' he had nothing in his Hands, he rent the *Lion* as he would have rent a *Kid*. Which done he went on; and without mentioning any thing of this *Adventure*, so much as to his Father or Mother, he entred Communication with the *Damsel*, and was so taken with her, that the Match was then concluded on.

It was not long ere he, and his Parents, went again to *Timnah*, to Solemnize the Marriage; and being come against the Place where he had before encountered and slain the *Lion*, he turned aside to look on it, and found, in the Carcass a *Swarm of Bees*, with some *Honey*: of which, taking some in his Hands, he went on eating; and when he overtook his Parents, he gave them some of it: but did not tell them, that he took it out of the *Lion's Carcass*.

Being come to *Timnah*, he made a *Marriage-feast*, to continue *Seven Days*: for so the young Men then and there, on such Occasions used to do. The *Maid's Relations*, on the other hand, brought him *Thirty Men*, to be his Companions during the Feast. To these *Samson* offered to propound a *Riddle*, under this Condition, that if within the *Seven Days* of the Feast, they could find out the Meaning of it, and declare it unto him, then he would give them *Thirty Shirts*, and *Thirty Changes of Apparel*. But if within that time they could not declare it to him, then they should give him as many of each. This was a sort of *Entertainment* not unusual in those times, to exercise their Wits on such Occasions: wherefore they, agreeing to the Terms, bid him put forth his *Riddle*, that they might hear it.

The *Riddle* was, *Out of the Eater came forth Meat: and out of the Strong came forth Sweetness.*

This so puzzled them, that for the *Three* first Days of the Feast, they could make nothing of it. Wherefore fearing they should lose the *Wager*, they set upon their Country-Woman, *Samson's* new Wife, upbraiding her, that her Friends and she had invited them to the Wedding, to impoverish them, by taking from them what they had. And they bid her, *Entice her Husband to tell her the Meaning of the Riddle*, that she might tell it them; threatening, if she did not, to burn her and her Father's House with Fire.

The Woman thereupon fell a weeping before her Husband, and complained that he did but hate her, and loved her not at all: for he had put forth a *Riddle* to the Children of her People, and had not told it to her. Why, said he, *I have not told it to either my Father or my Mother: and shall I tell it to thee?* This notwithstanding she continued weeping before him,

him, the rest of the *Seven Days*, while the Feast lasted: And on the *Judg. 14. Seventh Day*, she lay so sore upon him, that he told her; and she forthwith told the Men. They thereupon, just within time, before the Sun was gone down, came and asked him, *What is sweeter than Honey? And what is stronger than a Lion?* By this he knew they had been informed by his Wife: and therefore pleasantly told them, *If they had not plowed with his Heifer, they had not found out his Riddle.*

Being thus Betrayed by his *Philistine-Wife*, and thereby made *Debtor* to his *Thirty Companions*; his next Care was, where to get the *Thirty Changes* of Raiment for them.

And now the *Spirit of the Lord* coming mightily upon him, whereby his Strength and Courage was mightily encreased and raised, he went down to *Askalon*, (another City of the *Philistines*) and slaying *Thirty Men* of that City, he took their Cloaths, and gave *Change of Garments* unto them which expounded the *Riddle*. Which done, his Anger being kindled against the *Philistines*, he left *Timnah*, and went up to his Father's House.

Judg. 15. Tho' *Samson* had conceived just Offence against the *Philistines*; yet he retained a Kindness to his Wife: and sometime after went down to her Father's House to visit her, taking with him a Kid for a Present. But when he prepared to go to bed to her, her Father would not suffer him; Telling him, *I verily thought, that thou hadst utterly hated her* (and so hadst for ever abandoned her) *therefore I gave her to thy Companion.* But (said he) *here's her younger Sister, who is fairer than she, prithee take her instead of her.*

If *Samson's* Anger was kindled before, this was not likely to asswade it. He reckoned now he had such *Provocation*, that if he should do the *Philistines* a *Displeasure*, they could not justly blame him. Wherefore away went he, and having caught *Three Hundred Foxes*, he turned the Foxes Tail to Tail, and fastening a *Fire-brand* between every Two Tails, when he had set the Brands on Fire, he let the Foxes go into the *standing Corn* of the *Philistines*. By which means he burnt not only their Shocks and standing Corn; but their Vineyards also and Olives.

When the *Philistines* saw the Spoil that was made, they asked who had done it? and being told that it was *Samson*, the Son-in-law of the *Timnite*: and that he had done it because his Father-in-law had taken his Wife from him, and given her to his Companion; these *Philistines* were so enraged thereat, that they came up and burnt her and her Father's House with Fire. Thus they revenged her Husband upon her, who to save her self and Father's House from being burnt by them, had before betrayed her Husband to them.

This, how just soever on her, gave *Samson* a fresh occasion of falling again upon them. Wherefore he told the *Philistines*, *Tho' ye have done this, yet will I be avenged of you; and after that I will cease.* Accordingly falling on them, he smote them *Hip and Thigh*, with a great Slaughter. By which Phrase [*Hip and Thigh*] some understand *Horse and Foot*: others take it only for a *Proverbial Speech*, setting forth the greatness of the Slaughter.

This Execution done, *Samson*, not thinking it safe for him to continue among them, went and dwelt in the Top of the Rock *Etam*, as a Place of greater Safety. But when this was known, the *Philistines* went up, and pitched their Camp in *Judah*; at which the Men of *Judah* being startled, asked them *why they were come up against them?* they answered, *To bind Samson*; that we may do to him, as he hath done to us.

The

The Men of Judah, considering the Mischief that this was likely to bring upon them, sent *Three Thousand* Men of their Tribe, to bind Samson; and deliver him up.

These coming to him on the top of Mount Etam saluted him thus; *Knowest-thou not that the Philistines are Rulers over us? What then is this that thou hast done unto us*, in giving them this occasion to come up against us? Why, said he, *I have but done to them, as they did to me*. Well, said they, *We are come to bind thee*, that we may deliver thee into their Hands.

Samson, not willing to use his Strength against his Brethren, said, *Swear unto me, that ye will not fall upon me your selves; and then I will let you bind me*. They promised him solemnly, that they would not kill him; but would only bind him fast, that they might deliver him to the Philistines, and so save themselves. Upon which, he yielding himself to them, they bound him with *Two new Cords*, and brought him away from the Rock, to the Place where the Philistines lay encamped.

As soon as the Philistines saw him (safe now, as they thought, in their own Power) they testified their Joy by their Shouting. But the Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson with so great might, that the Cords, which were upon his Arms, became as Flax that was burnt with Fire; and his Bands were loosed from off his Hands. Whereupon finding a Jaw Bone of an Ass, that was fresh and new, he caught it up, and laid so manfully about him, with that simple Weapon, that he therewith slew a Thousand of the Philistines.

Having thus satisfied his Friends, and freed himself from his Enemies, he cast away the Jaw Bone. But being, with his Exercise and Heat, overcome with extream Thirst, in a Place where Water was not to be had, he cried to the Lord, saying, *Thou hast given this great Deliverance into the Hand of thy Servant; and now shall I die for Thirst, and fall into the Hands of the Uncircumcised?* Whereupon God clave an hollow Place that was in the Jaw, and there came Water out of it: of which Samson having drunk, his Spirit came again, and he revived.

Then went he down to Gaza, a City of the Philistines, where seeing a *Judg. 16.* Woman that kept a Victualling-House (perhaps a Harlot too) he went in, to lodge there: and the Gazites, being informed that he was there, compassed him in; and waiting quietly for him all Night in the Gate of the City, concluded they should have him in the Morning, and then they would kill him.

Samson having got notice of this, lay still till Midnight; and then rising, took the Doors of the Gate of the City, and the Two Posts, with the Bar that fastened them together: And laying them on his Shoulders, went away with them, carrying them up to the Top of an Hill that is before Hebron; and so escaped that Danger. But a worse soon befel him.

For not long after this going into the Valley of Sorek (which signifies both Wine and Hissing, thereby intimating, that Excess of Wine exposes to Hissing) he there fell in love with a Woman, whose Name was Delilah, which signifies a Consumer; and so she proved to him. For as soon as the Lords of the Philistines understood where his Haunt was, they applied themselves to Delilah, and told her, If she would entice him to discover to her wherein his great Strength lay, and by what means he might be bound, so as that they might afflict him, they would each of them give her *Eleven Hundred Shekels* of Silver: and there being Five of those Lords or Princes of the Philistines; Five times Eleven Hundred, or Five Thousand Five Hundred Shekels, each valuing Fifteen Pence, would amount to about *Three Hundred Forty Three Pounds, and Fifteen Shillings.* So

So great a Bait easily prevailed with the Woman, to do her Endeavour to betray Samson. Wherefore when she had him by her self, she said unto him, *Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great Strength lieth; and wherewith thou mightest be bound, to afflict thee.* He, willing to put her by, without discovering the Ground of his Strength, told her, *If they bound him with Seven new Withs, that had never been dried, then he should be weak, and as another Man.*

She forthwith imparting this to the Lords of the *Philistines*, they brought her Seven such *Withs*, and she bound him with them. And then, having Men lying in wait in the House, ready to seize upon him, she said hastily to him, *The Philistines be upon thee, Samson.* At which word, he, starting up on a sudden, brake the *Withs*, as easily as a Thread of Tow is broken, when it toucheth the Fire. So that it was not yet known in what his Strength lay.

Delilah, thus disappointed, charged him with having mocked her, and told her *Lies*; and therefore desired him now to tell her truly, wherewith he might be bound. He put her by again, by telling her, that if they bound him with new *Ropes*, that had never been used, he should be weak, and as other Men. She tried, getting new *Ropes*, and binding him therewith. But when she waked him on a sudden, by telling him the *Philistines were upon him*, he snapt the *Ropes* from off his Arms like a Thread.

Then she complained to him again, that hitherto he had but mocked her, and deceived her by *Falshoods*: wherefore she entreated him to tell her now indeed, with what he might be bound. He, again to shift her, that he might not discover wherein his Strength lay, directed her to weave the Seven Locks of his Head with the Web (which word bespeaks it to be a Weaver's House) she did so; fastening his Hair, so platted together, with the Pin of the Loom: and then crying out *The Philistines be upon thee, Samson*; he leaping up, out of his Sleep, went away with the Pin of the Beam, and the Web, hanging at his Locks.

He was wont to tell her *he loved her*; with which she now upbraiding him, asked him, *How he could say he loved her, seeing his Heart was not with her?* For, said she, thou hast deluded me these Three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great Strength lieth; tho' thou madest me believe thou wouldst.

Thus pressing him daily, with her *Importunities*, and urging him till he was weary of his Life; he at length opened his Heart to her, and told her, *There had never yet come a Razor upon his Head: for he had been a Nazarite unto God from his Mother's Womb; and that if he should be shaven, his Strength would go from him, and he should become weak, like another Man.*

Now knew *Delilah* that she had obtained her End of him. Wherefore she sent for the Lords of the *Philistines* to come to her this one time more: letting them know, he had now discovered the whole Secret to her.

They hasten to her, with the Money in their Hands; and she, having lulled him to sleep in her Lap, caused a Man (whom she had provided for that purpose) to shave off the Seven Locks of his Head. Which done, she began to afflict him; telling him, *The Philistines were upon him.* He thereupon, waking out of his Sleep, said, *I'll go forth, as I used to do, and shake my self; not witting that the Lord was departed from him, till he found his Strength was gone.*

The *Philistines* seeing him now really disabled, seized immediately on him; and to make sure of him, the first thing they did was to put out his Eyes. Then bringing him down to Gaza, they bound him

now

now in earnest *with Fetters of Brasses*: and putting him into the Prison-House (or Bride-well,) they there *made him grind*.

Judg. 16.

After some time, the Lords of the *Philistines* gathered their People together; to offer a great Sacrifice to *Dagon*, their God, and to rejoyce. This *Dagon*, being the common God of the Sea-coasts, had the Form of a *Man* from the *Navel* upwards; and downwards of a *Fish* (from which the Word is derived.) And to him these Lords of the *Philistines* ascribed the Delivery of *Samson* into their Hands. Nor they only, but the rest of the People also praising their God *Dagon*, said, *Our God hath delivered into our Hands our Enemy; the Destroyer of our Country, who slew many of us*.

When they had feasted a while, and their Hearts were merry, they said one to another, *Call for Samson, that he may make us Sport*. Whereupon *Samson* was brought forth out of the Prison, and being set *between Two* of the Pillars, which supported the House where they were, they made themselves *Sport* with him.

At this Solemnity were present, not only all the Lords of the *Philistines*, but the Houseful of Men and Women. And because the House was not capacious enough to receive the Company, about *Three Thousand* Men and Women, had placed themselves upon the Roof of the House; to behold the Sport that was made with *Samson*.

By this time *Samson's Hair* was somewhat grown again. And as it is probable his *Strength* might begin to return: so it is not to be doubted, that these *Indignities* would raise in his Spirit the highest *Indignation*. Wherefore having perswaded the Lad that led him, to set him so, that he might feel the Pillars whereon the House stood; on pretence of *Leaning* upon them, to rest him: he called in Spirit unto the Lord, and said, *O Lord God, Remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God; that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my Two Eyes*.

Then feeling a wonderful *Accession* of Strength, he took hold of the *Two middle* Pillars, which bore up the House, one with his Right-hand, and the other with his Left; and bowing himself with all his Might, that he might exert his utmost Strength, he said: *Let me die with the Philistines*. And with that Word, removing those Two Pillars, the House fell down upon the Lords, and upon all the People that were therein: so that *they which he slew at his Death, were more, than they which he slew in his Life*.

This was the End of *Samson*, who is said to have *Judged Israel Twenty Years*: and was rather indeed a *Scourge*, or *Maul*, to the *Philistines*, than a *Deliverer* of the *Israelites*. Yet he may be said to have begun to deliver *Israel*: which is as much as the *Angel*, before he was conceived, foretold he should do.

When his Brethren heard of his Death, they, with all the House of his Father, came down and took him; and having brought him up, buried him between *Zorah* and *Eshtaol*, in the Burying-place of *Manoah* his Father.

The End of the Book of JUDGES.

T H E
First BOOK
O F
S A M U E L:

Containing an History of Sixty, or Eighty Years. I say Sixty, or Eighty ; because tho' Forty Years be allotted to Eli, and Forty to Samuel and Saul: yet Twenty out of Eli's Forty, are by most Chronologers given to Samson ; whose Story is delivered before.

AFTER the Death of *Samson* (who is accounted the last of the *extraordinary Judges*) the *Administation* of the Government, in the *Israelitish* Common-wealth, seems to have *devolved* upon *Eli*, who was then the High-Priest ; unless we should rather say, It *revolved*, or returned to *Eli*, as High-Priest, to whom in the *ordinary Course of Magistracy* among the *Israelites*, it belonged, during those *Twenty Years* wherein *Samson* is said to have judged *Israel*.

In this *Eli's* time was born the Prophet *Samuel*, the Son of *Elkanah*, 1 Sam. 1. A. M. 2860. a *Levite* descended from that *Korah*, who in *Moses* his time, for his *Rebellion* in the Wilderness, was swallowed up by the gaping Earth, and all he had with him, *Numb. 16. except his Sons, Numb. 26. 11.* from the Eldest of which, named *Assir*, the *Genealogy* is drawn down to *Samuel*, in *1 Chron. 6. from ver. 22. to 28.*

This *Elkanah* had Two Wives, *Hannah* and *Peninnah*. *Peninnah* had Children ; Sons and Daughters : but *Hannah*, to her great Grief, had none.

Once a Year *Elkanah* went up out of his City, to Worship and Sacrifice unto the Lord of Hosts in *Shiloh* : taking with him his Two Wives, and his Children. And when he had made his Offerings ; he gave Portions to *Peninnah*, and to all her Children : but to *Hannah* he gave a *Double Portion* ; because he loved her best.

Watchful *Peninnah*, observing that, grew *emulous* : and to revenge her self, provoked and vexed *Hannah*, by upbraiding her with her *Barrenness*. This so troubled poor *Hannah*, that she wept, and did not eat : Which her kind Husband taking notice of, asked her, *Hannah, Why weep-est*

est thou? Why eatest thou not? And why is thy Heart grieved? And
 1 Sam. 1. *supposing the Cause, added, Am not I better to thee, than Ten Sons?*

Hannah, not returning Answer, rose up, after they had eaten in Shiloh; and in the Bitterness of her Soul, poured forth her Prayer unto the Lord, with sore Weeping. And she vowed a Vow, saying, O Lord of Hosts, If thou wilt indeed look on the Affliction of thine Handmaid, and remember me; and wilt give unto thine Handmaid, a Manchild: then will I give him unto the Lord all the Days of his Life; and there shall no Razor come upon his Head. That is, he should be a Nazarite, devoted to the Lord.

This Hannah spake in her Heart; not uttering her Voice, but only moving her Lips. Which Eli the Priest (who sat upon a Seat by a Post of the House of the Lord, where the Ark then was kept) observing, and thinking she had been Drunk; reproved her, saying, How long wilt thou be Drunk? Put away thy Wine from thee.

But Hannah mildly answered, No, my Lord, I am a Woman of a sorrowful Spirit. I have drank neither Wine, nor strong Drink: but have poured out my Soul before the Lord. Count not thine Handmaid for a Daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my Complaint and Grief, have I spoken.

Eli, now finding he had been under a Mistake, turned his Reproof into a Blessing; saying unto her, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy Petition, which thou hast asked of him. She begging the Continuance of his Prayers for her, went cheerfully away.

Early next Morning they arose, and having worshipped the Lord, they returned to their House at Ramah. And the Lord remembered her, so that she conceived, and in due time was brought to Bed of a Son; whom she Named Samuel, that is, Asked of God.

The next Year Elkanah went up again, with his Family, to offer unto the Lord the Yearly Sacrifice; and to confirm his Vow, concerning the Dedication of Samuel to God: which shews he was privy, and made himself a Party to his Wife's Vow.

But Hannah, being a Nurse, desired her Husband to excuse her from going up, until the Child should be weaned: and then she would go up with him, that he might appear before the Lord, and abide in his Service for ever. Which good Intention her Husband approving, consented that she should tarry with the Child, until she had weaned him; praying, that the Lord would Establish his Word concerning him: which implies, that the Lord, upon Hannah's Praying for a Son, and vowing to dedicate him to the Lord, had foretold some great Good concerning him.

Now when Hannah had weaned her little Samuel, she took him up with her (young as he was) to the Yearly Sacrifices, with Three Bulls, an Ephah of Flower, and a Bottle of Wine. And having brought him to the House of the Lord in Shiloh, they slew a Bullock; and then bringing the Child to Eli, she told him, she was the Woman that at such a time stood by him there, praying unto the Lord.

It was for this Child, said she, that I then prayed; and the Lord hath given me my Petition, which I asked of him: therefore also (added she) I have returned him to the Lord, as long as he liveth he shall be returned to the Lord. And he worshipped the Lord there, saith the Text: but without certainty, which He it was, whether Eli, or Samuel. Some Annotators say it was Eli; who gave thanks to the Lord, for having heard and graciously answered Hannah's Petition. Others say it was Samuel; who, as he was Instructed, bowed before the Lord: and the Word translated Worshipped, signifies to Bow. However it was, devout Hannah
 brake

brake forth into a *triumphant Song*; composed of *Praises, Thanksgivings* and *Prayer*: which read in *Chap. 2. v. 1. to 11.*

The Solemnity being over, and *Elkanah* with his Family ready to depart; *Eli* the Priest pronounced a Solemn Blessing upon him and his Wife *Hannah*, saying, *The Lord give thee Seed of this Woman, for the Loan which is lent to the Lord, meaning Samuel.* 1 Sam. 2.

Him, at their departure, they left behind them with *Eli*; and he, being girded with a *Linen Ephod*, did minister before the Lord; as *Eli* directed him. And once a year, when his Mother came up with her Husband, to offer the yearly Sacrifice, she made him a little Coat, and brought it him. And the Child *Samuel*, the Text says, grew before the Lord. Which manner of Speech may well be supposed to have Respect, not only to a natural growth in bodily Stature, but (and perhaps more especially) to an inward growth in Divine Graces, and excellent Endowments of Mind, necessary to fit and qualifie him for the Service he was devoted to.

And since *Hannah*, after her long Barrenness, had modestly asked but One Son; and that, that she might dedicate him to God: the Lord was pleased to visit her again, so that she conceived and bare Three Sons more, and Two Daughters besides; to be with her, and to be a Comfort to her.

Eli himself had Two Sons, *Hophni* and *Phinehas*; grown up to be Men: and both lewd young Men; who regarded not the Lord; but bearing themselves high upon the Authority of the Priesthood, domineered over the Men, and defiled the Women.

And to such a pass they had brought things; that they would neither be content with the Part or Portion, which God had assigned them, of the Flesh of the Sacrifice; nor stay the time appointed for them to receive it. But they would both be their own Carvers: and in their own time. So that, when any Man offered Sacrifice, the Priest's Servant came, while the Flesh was in seething, with a Trident, or Flesh-hook of Three Teeth in his Hand; and striking it into the Caldron amongst the Flesh, all that the Flesh-hook brought up, the Priest took for himself: and thus they did in *Shiloh*, unto all the *Israelites* that came thither.

Besides, when the Priest's Palate was more for Roast than Boiled, his Servant would come, before the Fat was burnt, and say to the Men that Sacrificed, Give Flesh to Roast for the Priest: for he will not have sodden Flesh of thee, but Raw. This was directly contrary to the Law. Yet if any Man did but say, Let them burn the Fat first; and then take as much as thou pleasest: the Priests Servant would answer, Nay, but thou shalt give it me now; and if not, I will take it by force.

Thus did these swaggering Priests oppress the People, and transgress the Law of God. Whereby they begat in the People a Dislike to the Service of the Lord: so that they had no mind to offer at all. This made the Sin of the Priests very great before the Lord: which yet did not excuse the People, from being also guilty, in neglecting the Service of the Lord.

By this time *Eli* was grown very old. And tho' he heard all that his Sons did unto all *Israel*; and how they lay with the Women, that assembled at the Door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation: yet he did not restrain, nor punish them, as he (being not only their Father, but the chief Magistrate) ought to have done. See *Deut. 21. v. 18, 19, 20, 21.* But in a sort of easie way, he said to them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil Dealings by all this People. Nay, my Sons: for it is no good Report, that I hear, ye make the Lord's People to transgress.

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1 Sam. 2. If one Man sin against another, the Judge shall judge him : but if a Man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him? This light Reproof they as lightly regarded : for they had provoked the Lord to harden them to Destruction.

Then came a Man of God to Eli, with this Message. Thus saith the Lord, Did I plainly appear unto the House of thy Father (to wit, Aaron) when they were in Egypt in Bondage to Pharaoh? And did I choose him of all the Tribes of Israel, to be my Priest, to offer upon mine Altar, to burn Incense, to wear an Ephod before me? And did I give unto the House of thy Father, all the Offerings made by Fire of the Children of Israel? Why then do ye kick at my Sacrifice, and at mine Offering, which I have commanded in my Habitation? And why honourest thou thy Sons above me, to make your selves fat with the chiefest of the Offerings of Israel my People? Whence it is observable. That in the Judgment of God, they that indulge their Children in that which offends God, honour them above him.

Having thus set forth the Lord's Beneficence towards Eli's House, and his and his Sons Ingratitude; the Man of God proceeded to denounce the Divine Sentence against them; first more generally thus,

Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed (to wit, at the first Institution of the Priest-hood, *Exod. 28. 43. and 39. 9.*) that thy House, and the House of thy Father, should walk before me, (*viz.* in the Priest-hood) for ever. But now the Lord saith, Be it far from me, for them that honour me I will honour : and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed. Whence again we may observe, That the Indulging of Children in their Evil Courses, to the Dishonour of God, and Contempt of his Service, is accounted by God a despising of him.

From this General, the Man of God goes on, to denounce a more close and particular Judgment upon Eli and his House. Behold, (said he, in the Name of the Lord) The Days come that I will Cut off thine Arm (thy Strength, by which thou shouldest help thy self) and (not only thy Arm, who art an old and worn-out Man, but) the Arm of thy Father's House; that henceforth there shall not be an old Man in thy House for ever. (And that, as old as he was, he might expect to see the Accomplishment of this Sentence in his own Life-time, he added) And thou shalt see an Enemy in my Habitation, in all the Wealth which God shall give Israel (or instead of all the Good which God would have done to Israel.) And the Man of thine, whom I shall not cut off from mine Altar, shall be to consume thine Eyes, and to grieve thine Heart : and all the Increase of thy House shall die in the Flower of their Age. And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy Two Sons, Hophni and Phinehas; in one Day they shall both die. And I will raise me up a Faithful Priest, (*viz. Zadoc, 1 Kings 2. 35.*) who shall do according to that which is in my Heart and in my Mind : and I will build him a sure House; and he shall walk before mine Anointed for ever. Then, to shew Eli the wretched Poverty that his Posterity should fall into; he added, And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left in thy House, shall come and crouch to him (Zadoc) for a piece of Silver and a Morsel of Bread : and shall say, Put me, I pray thee, into one of the Priest's Offices, that I may have a piece of Bread to eat.

Who this Man of God was, that brought this unwelcome Message to Eli, is very uncertain. Tremellius and Junius, in their Notes upon the Place, take him to be Samuel. But that seems not likely; both for that, Samuel, was then too young, and in the next Chapter is set forth as one not yet acquainted with the Voice of the Lord; and also for that the Lord, when he had spoken to Samuel, tells him, as a Thing he

he knew not of before, that he had denounced a Judgment against *Eli* and his House. Certain it is, that it was a *dark* time. There was *no open Vision*, no certain known Prophet, such as *Moses* had been before, and as *Samuel*, *Nathan*, *Elijah*, and others were afterwards: but *the Word of the Lord was precious* (that is rare, and seldom heard) in those Days.

Eli now grown very old, his Eyes began to wax dim; so that he could see but little. And one Night, heing gone to rest in his Place (which was in that part of the Court of the Lord's House, which was next the Tabernacle, and where the Priests Chambers were) before the Lamp of God went out in the Morning (that is, before Day) the Lord called *Samuel*; who was also in Bed in his Apartment, in the further Part of the Tabernacle, where the *Levites* had their Lodgings. 1 Sam. 3.

Samuel, hearing himself called, answered, (as the manner was) *Here am I*: and starting up, ran to *Eli*, as supposing he had called him. But when *Eli* told him he had not called him; he went, and lay down again.

He had not lain long, ere the Lord called him again. Whereupon as before, he got up, and went to *Eli*, and said, *Here I am: for thou didst call me*. But *Eli* told him he called him not; and bid him go, and lie down again.

Samuel was young (supposed to be about *Twelve* Years old) and did not yet so know the Lord, as to have the Word of the Lord revealed unto him. And *Eli* was not so regardful of the Lord's Appearance, as his Years and Station required him to be: else he might sooner have understood, that it was the Lord that called *Samuel*.

Scarce was *Samuel* well settled in his Bed, when the Lord called him again the *Third* Time. Upon which, the *Diligent* Child, not discouraged by his Two former Disappointments, arose and went again to *Eli*; and said, *Here I am: for thou didst call me*. This *Third* Summons rozed dull *Eli*: and gave him to perceive that the Lord had called the Child. Which his Apprehension he imparted to *Samuel*; and bidding him go to Bed again, directed him that if the Lord should call him again, he should say, *Speak Lord: for thy Servant heareth*.

By that time *Samuel* was composed to Rest, the Lord came and stood (a Phrase used to reach Man's low Capacity) and called, as at other times, *Samuel, Samuel*. Whereupon *Samuel*, as *Eli* had instructed him, readily answered: *Speak, for thy Servant heareth*.

Then said the Lord to *Samuel*, *Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the Ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that Day I will perform against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his House from the beginning to the end. For I have told him, that I will judge his House for ever, for the Iniquity which he is privy to: because his Sons made themselves vile, and he (tho' both a Father, an High-priest and a Judge) did not restrain them. And therefore, I have sworn unto the House of Eli, that the Iniquity of Eli's House shall not be purged with Sacrifice, nor Offering for ever; (so as to reverse the Judgment, and recover the Priest-hood.)*

When *Samuel* had heard this heavy Sentence against his Master *Eli*, he lay still until the Morning. And then rising, he opened the Doors of the House of the Lord, according to his Office: but was afraid to shew *Eli* the Vision. But *Eli*, now thoroughly awakened, both by the Message he had received before (*Chap. 2. 27.*) and the Sense he had, That the Lord had now revealed something to *Samuel*, calling *Samuel* to him; and both entreated, and adjured him to tell him, what it was that the Lord said unto him, and to hide nothing of it from him. Whereupon the Innocent Youth told it him every whit, not concealing any thing from him. And *Eli*, at the hearing of it, had the Grace to say; *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* Thus

Thus after a long *cloudy* time, wherein there had been *no open Vision*; the Lord appeared again in *Shiloh*, revealing himself to *Samuel* there, by the Word of the Lord. For as *Samuel* grew up (both in *Stature*, as a Man; and in *Grace*, as a Man of God) the Lord was with him, and accomplished whatsoever he spake by him: so that *all Israel* knew, from one end of the Land to the other, that *Samuel* was a Faithful Prophet of the Lord.

1 Sam. 4. Their having now gotten a Prophet again amongst them, might not im- probably animate the *Israelites*, after some time, to try, if they could shake off the *Philistian* Yoke. Wherefore they went out against the *Philistines* to Battel; and pitched in a place, which afterwards (upon better Success, *Chap. 7. 12.*) was called *Eben-Ezer*. The *Philistines*, on the other Hand, pitched in *Aphek*, (a City belonging to the Tribe of *Judah*, *Josh. 15. 53.*) And when the Armies joyned Battel, the Lord, intending now to bring upon the Priest and People the Judgment before denounced, suffered the *Philistines* to prevail: so that *Israel* was smitten down before them; and about *Four Thousand* of the *Israelitish* Army were slain out-right in the Field.

The rest retreating to their Camp, the Elders began to consider what should be the Cause, that the Lord had smitten them that Day before the *Philistines*. And supposing it to be, for want of having the *Ark* with them, they concluded, that their future Safety and Success would depend, upon their having the *Ark* of the Covenant of the Lord in the Camp amongst them. Wherefore they sent some to *Shiloh*, to bring it them from thence; and with it the Priests, *Hophni* and *Phinehas*, Two Sons of *Eli*.

No sooner did the *Israelites* see the *Ark* of the Covenant of the Lord come into the Camp, but they shouted with so great a Shout, that it made the Earth ring again. Which when the *Philistines* in their Camp heard, and upon enquiring the Reason of it, understood, that the *Ark* of the Lord was come into the Camp of *Israel*; they were afraid, and cried out, *God is come into the Camp; wo be to us: for there never was such a thing before. Wo be to us*, said they again; *who shall deliver us out of the Hands of these mighty Gods?* (so they, being Polytheists, or Worshippers of many Gods, spake) *These are they that smote the Egyptians, after all the other Plagues, in the Wilderness. Be strong therefore, and quit your selves like Men, O ye Philistines* (said they one to another) *that ye be not Servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been unto you: Quit your selves like Men, and Fight.* Thus they encouraged one another, rather from Despair than Hope.

The *Israelites*, on the other hand, were Fool-hardy and bold, because the *Ark* of the Lord was with them; not considering, that the Lord of the *Ark* was departed from them: which to their Cost they soon found, when the Armies joyned Battel again. For *Israel* was smitten, and put to Flight; and great havock was made of them: so that *Thirty Thousand* Footmen of them were slain. The *Ark* of God also was taken, and *Hophni* and *Phinehas*, *Eli's* Two Sons, were slain; as the Lord had before (*chap. 2. 34.*) denounced they should be.

One of the Soldiers, a Man of *Benjamin*, when he saw the Day was lost, made his escape out of the Field, and came running into *Shiloh*, with his Clothes rent, and Earth upon his Head: which were then, in those Countries, Emblems of extream Sorrow, for the greatest Losses.

Eli was now *Ninety and Eight* Years Old. And tho' he had wholly lost his Sight: yet he sat on a Seat, by the way-side, *listening*; that he might learn how things went with the Army. For tho' he failed, through his Tenderness towards his Sons (which was the Occasion of his Ruin:)

yet

yet he had a Religious Concern for the Safety of *Israel*; and his *Heart trembled* for the Ark of God.

And when he heard the *doleful Out-cry*; that the Citizens made, when the Soldier came in and told them the *Evil Tidings*; he asked, *What means the noise of this Tumult?* Whereupon the Soldier coming hastily to him, told him summarily, that *Israel was fled* before the *Philistines*; that a *great Slaughter* was made among the People; that his Two Sons, *Hophni* and *Phinehas*, were dead; and finally, that the *Ark of God was taken*. 1 Sam. 4.

The *Loss* of the *Battel*, the *Slaughter* of the *People*, and the *Death* of his Sons, *Eli* heard and kept his *Seat*. But when he heard the *Ark of God was taken*; his *Spirits* failing, he fell from his *Seat* backward, by the side of the *Gate*: and being *heavy*, as well as *old*, his *Neck brake* with the fall, and he died; after he had judged *Israel* *Forty Years* (including the time of *Samson's* Rule, as some hold.) A. M. 2887.

His Son *Phinehas* had a *Wife* great with *Child*, and *near her time*; who, when she heard the *Tidings*, that the *Ark of God* was taken, and that her *Father-in-law* and her *Husband* were dead, *fell in Travel*: for her *Pains* came upon her. And being delivered, when her *Women*, to cheer her, bid her not *Fear*; for she had born a *Son*: She, not regarding them nor it, with her *dying Breath* Named the *Child*, *I-chabod*, that is, *No Glory*; adding as the Reason, *The Glory is departed from Israel*, for the *Ark of God* is taken.

Thus it was in *Israel*. Now let us see what the *Philistines* got by their *Victory*.

They having won the *Field*, and taken amongst the *Spoils*, the *Ark of God*; brought it to *Ashdod* (one of their *Five Principal Cities*), and set it there by *Dagon*: which was their chief *Idol*, represented in Form of a *Man* upwards, and of a *Fish* downwards.

Early next Morning, when they of *Ashdod* arose, they found *Dagon* fallen down upon his *Face* to the *Earth*, before the *Ark of the Lord*: wherefore they took up *Dagon*, and set him in his *Place* again. But he could not hold it. For on the morrow Morning, rising early again, they found *Dagon* down again; and in worse *Condition* now than before, for now he was not only fallen; but his *Head* and both the *Palms* of his *Hands* were cut off upon the *Threshold*, and only his *Fishy* part was left him. Thereupon a *Superstitious Conceit* entring the *Philistines*, both *Priests* and *People*, neither one nor to'ther, that came into *Dagon's* House, would tread upon the *Threshold*.

But the *Philistines* were not punished in their *Idol* only: but their own *Persons* also. For the *Hand* of the *Lord* was heavy upon them of *Ashdod*, and the *Coasts* thereabouts; smiting the *People* with *Emerods* (the Disease called the *Piles*) and (as may be gathered from, *Chap. 6. 5.*) destroying, at the same time, the *Country* by *Mice*.

The *Men* of *Ashdod*, being sensible that this was a *Judgment* upon them, for taking and keeping the *Ark*, said, *The Ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his Hand is sore upon us; and upon Dagon our God*. Wherefore gathering the *Lords* of the *Philistines* together, they opened their *Case* to them, and asked them, what they should do with the *Ark of the God of Israel*?

The *Lords* of the *Philistines*, partly to *Ease* the present *Complainers*, but principally to carry the *Ark* about in *Triumph*, gave order that the *Ark of the God of Israel* should be carried about unto *Gath*, (which was another of their *Five Principal Cities*) and accordingly to *Gath* they carried it. 1 Sam. 5.

But when it was come thither, *the Hand of the Lord was against that*
1 Sam. 5. City, with a very great Destruction: for he smote the People, both small
 and great, with *Emerods* in their secret Parts. The *Gathites* there-
 upon, to free themselves from this Plague, sent the Ark of God to *Ekron*
 (another of their Five Principal Cities.)

As soon as the *Ekronites* saw it come, they cried out, *They have*
brought about the Ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our
People. They therefore sending with all speed, gathered together the
 Lords of the *Philistines*; whom they besought to send away the Ark of
 the God of *Israel*, and let it go again to its own Place, *that*, (said
 they) *it slay not us and our People*, which they had reason to fear: for
 the Hand of God was *very heavy* there; so that there was a *deadly*
Destruction throughout all the City. And the Men that died not, were
 smitten with the *Emerods*: and the Cry of the City went up to Heaven.

Seven Months was the Ark of God in the Country of the *Philistines*,
1 Sam. 6. and *Three* of their Five Principal Cities had *smarted deeply* for it. But
 now, finding no Safety in keeping it, they began to think of sending it
 home: which yet they were afraid to do; lest by committing some
fresh Error, they should draw some *fresh Plague* upon themselves.

Wherefore consulting with their *Priests* and *Sooth-sayers*, they asked
 them, what they should do to the Ark of the Lord? bidding them
 tell them, *wherewith they should send it to its Place.*

They advised them, *Not to send it empty*; but in any wise to return
 him a *Trespass-offering*: telling them, they should then be healed; and
 should know why his Hand had lain so long, and so heavy upon them.
 And when the others asked, what that *Trespass-offering* should be? they
 replied, *Five Golden Emerods, and Five golden Mice*; according to the
 Number of the Lords of the *Philistines*.

For (said they) the Plague was upon you all, both Lords and People.
 Wherefore ye shall make Images of your Emerods, and Images of the
 Mice that destroy your Land. And *when ye have given Glory unto the*
God of Israel, peradventure he will lighten his Hand from off you, and
from off your Gods, and from off your Land. To what purpose (added
 they) should you harden your Hearts? as the *Egyptians* and *Pharaoh* har-
 dened their Hearts. For when he had wrought wonderfully among them,
 did they not let the People go, and they departed?

Now therefore (said they) *Make a new Cart, and take two Milch Kine*
on which there hath come no Yoke; and fasten the Kine to the Cart,
and bring their Calves home from them. And take the Ark of the Lord,
and lay it upon the Cart, and put the Jewels of Gold (the Golden Emerods
and Mice) which ye return him for a Trespass-offering, in a Coffer by the
side thereof; and send it away, that it may go. But take good notice
which way it goeth: for if it goeth up by the way of its own Coast to
Beth-shemesh, then we may conclude, that it is the God of Israel hath
done us this great Evil. But if it go not that way; then we shall know
that it was not his Hand that smote us: but only an Accident befel us.

According to this Direction, the *Philistines* acted. For they took Two
 Milch Kine, and fastening them to the Cart, shut up their Calves at home.
 Then having laid upon the Cart the Ark of the Lord, with the Coffer, in
 which the Golden Images of the Mice and Emerods were; and turned
 the Kine going: they took the straight way to *Beth-shemesh*, lowing as
 they went; without turning at all aside to one Hand or t'other. And
 the Five Lords of the *Philistines* went after them unto the Border of
Beth-shemesh; to see what would become of the Ark.

It was *Wheat-harvest*; and the *Beth-shemites* were reaping in the
 Valley. But when they, lifting up their Eyes, saw the Ark coming,
 they

they rejoiced at the Sight. The Kine having brought the Cart into the Field of *Joshua* the *Beth-shemite*, stood still there, by a great Stone, ^{1 Sam. 6.} called the Stone of *Abel*. Which the *Levites* seeing (for *Beth-shemesh* was a City belonging to them, *Josh. 21. 16.*) they took down the *Ark* of the Lord, and the *Coffer* that was with it (wherein were the Jewels of Gold) and put them upon the great Stone. Then cleaving the Wood of the Cart, they offered the Kine for a *Burnt-Offering* to the Lord. Which when the Five Lords of the *Philistines* had seen, they returned to *Ekron* the same day.

But the prying *Beth-shemites* made bold, it seems, to look into the *Ark*, contrary to the Law (*Numb. 4. 5. and 20.*) Wherefore the Lord smote them with a very great Slaughter; of no less than *Fifty Thousand and Threescore and Ten Men*. Which made the *Beth-shemites* lament, and say, *Who is able to stand before this Holy Lord God? And to whom shall he go up from among us?* This made them quickly weary of the *Ark*: And that they might get handsomely rid of it, they sent Messengers to the Inhabitants of *Kirjath-fearim*, to acquaint them that the *Philistines* had brought again the *Ark* of the Lord; and to desire them to come down, and fetch it up to them.

They, as glad to have it, as the others were to part with it, soon ^{1 Sam. 7.} fetched it from them. And having brought it into the House of *Abinidab* in the Hill, they consecrated *Eleazar* his Son to keep it: And full *Twenty Years* did the *Ark* abide there; the House of *Israel* mean while lamenting after the Lord.

All this while we have heard nothing of *Samuel*, nor of the Affairs of *Israel*, from the time that they were beaten by the *Philistines*, and lost the *Ark*, until now. And now *Samuel*, finding in the People a good Disposition to repent, and return unto the Lord, spake unto all the House of *Israel* thus, *If ye do return unto the Lord with all your Hearts, then put away the strange Gods, and Ashtaroth from among you; and prepare your Hearts unto the Lord and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the Hand of the Philistines.*

This good Exhortation had so good an effect, that the Children of *Israel* did put away *Baalim* and *Ashtaroth*; and served the Lord only. Whereupon *Samuel* gave order that all *Israel* should be gathered together to *Mizpeh*, letting them know that he would pray unto the Lord for them.

Accordingly they assembled at *Mizpeh*; which signifies both a *Watch-Tower*, and *Judgment*. But while they were humbling themselves there before the Lord, with *Fasting*, *Praying*, and *Confessing* their Sins; the *Philistines*, having got notice of this *General Meeting* of theirs, went up in Arms against them, and put them in great Fear: which made them urgent with *Samuel*, that he would cry incessantly unto the Lord their God for them, to save them out of the Hands of the *Philistines*.

Samuel thereupon taking a *Sucking Lamb*, offered it whole for a *Burnt-offering* to the Lord; and cried unto the Lord for *Israel*. And the Lord so graciously answered him, that the *Philistines* coming out to give *Battel* (or to fall upon *Israel*) at the very time when *Samuel* was offering up the *Burnt-offering*: the Lord thundered with a great Thunder upon the *Philistines*, and discomfited them, so that they were smitten before *Israel*.

For the Men of *Israel*, taking advantage of the Disorder the *Philistines* were in, marched out of *Mezpeh*, and pursuing them smote them so, that the *Philistines* were subdued, and came no more to infest *Israel* (so strong and boldly, at least, as they had done:) for the Hand
of

of the Lord was against them all the Days of *Samuel*; and the Cities, *Sam. 7.* which the *Philistines* had taken from *Israel*, were restored to *Israel*.

Samuel, for a grateful memorial of this great Deliverance, took a Stone, and setting it up between *Mizpeh* and *Shen*, called it *Eben-Ezer*, (that is, *The Stone of help*) saying, *Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.*

The *Philistines* thus (for the present brought under; and there being Peace between *Israel* and the *Amorites*, who had used to be troublesome Neighbours: *Samuel*, for the better Administration of Justice, went from Year to Year in Circuit, (the first Itinerant Judge) to *Beth-el*, and *Gilgal*, and *Mizpeh*, and judged *Israel* in all those Places; returning still, at the end of his Circuit, to *Ramah*, where his Dwelling-House was.

But as Age grew upon him, finding this Travel uneasy to him, he made his Two Sons Judges over *Israel*; of which the Name of the Elder was *Joel*, and of the Younger *Abiah*. But *his Sons walk-*
Sam. 8. *ed not in his ways*: but turning aside after *Lucre*, took *Bribes*, (expressly forbidden, *Deut. 16. 19.*) and *perverted Judgment*.

Hereupon the Elders of the People went in a Body together to *Ramah*, to lay their Complaint before *Samuel*. And being come to him, they thus opened the Case to him. *Behold, thou art Old: and thy Sons* (whom thou hast set as Judges over us) *walk not in thy ways.*

Tho' this was *short* and *blunt*; yet had they stopt here, it had been well: but they go on, and say, *Now make us a King to judge us, like all the Nations.*

They would change, not only the *Governors*, but the *Government*: that Form of Government which God had appointed them; for a Form of Government which he had not appointed them. And this they would do, not upon any pretence of gaining a *better Government*; but that they might thereby make themselves *like the Heathens*, whom God had taken so much Care and Pains (if I may so speak) to *difference* them from; and make them in this (and in almost all things else) as *unlike* to, as might be.

This *Proposal* of theirs was very *unpleasing* to *Samuel*. Wherefore, before he would give them any Answer, he spread the Matter before the Lord. And the Lord, who saw that these Elders of *Israel* took *Advantage* from the *Male-Administration* of *Samuel's* Sons, to throw off that *Government* which he had set over them, and *choose for themselves*, resolved to *punish* them with their own Desire. Therefore he bid *Samuel* answer their Demand. For, said he, *They have not rejected thee only, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them, and appoint them Judges as I please.*

And that *Samuel* might not be over-much troubled, for the flight put upon him, the Lord told him, they had done no otherwise by him, than they had done by the Lord himself, ever since he had brought them up out of *Egypt*: often forsaking him, and serving other Gods.

Wherefore he directed him, first, *to protest solemnly to them*, that he did not approve of what they desired; but only yielded to their Importunity: and then to declare unto them, after what an *Arbitrary* Manner such an *Absolute*, and *Sovereign Monarch*, as they aimed at (and as the *Gentiles*, whom they would be like, had, *Mat. 20. 25.*) would reign over them. And if after that, they should still persist in their Demand, he should answer them in it.

Samuel, thus instructed, told the People that asked him for a King, how the King that they would have to rule over them, would deal with them. *He'll take* (said he) *your Sons, and make them, some his Charioteers, some his Grooms, and others his Footmen, to run before his Chariots.*

Chariots. And some of them he will set to plough his Ground, and to reap his Harvest, and to make his Instruments of War, and for his Chariots. ^{1 Sam. 8.} *Your Daughters also he will take, to be Confectioners, Cooks, and Bakers. And he'll have a Standing Army: appointing him Captains over Thousands, and over Fifties, (whereby he may bring you into absolute Slavery.) And to maintain his Army, he'll not only take your Fields and your Vineyards, and your Olive-yards, even the best of them; and give them to his Servants: but he'll tax you at his Pleasure; for he'll take the Tenth of your Seed, and of your Vineyards, and of your Sheep. He will take your Men-servants also, and your Maid-servants, and your goodliest young Men and your Cattel, and put them to his Work; (and in a Word,) will bring you into an Absolute Subjection. And then ye shall cry out, because of your King which ye shall have chosen; but the Lord will not hear you then.*

This, one would think (if they had believed it) would have scared the People from desiring a King; such an one, at least, as they aimed at. But they, when they had heard all this, cried, *Nay, but we will have a King over us: that we also may be like all the Nations; and that our King may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our Battels.*

It is supposed by some, that that which made them so urgent at this time for a King, was a present streight they thought themselves in, for want of an *Able Leader*. For *Nabash*, the King of the *Ammonites*, coming and encamping against *Jabesh-gilead*, had put the Men of *Jabesh* into such a Fright; that without more ado, they offered to *surrender upon Terms*, telling him they would *become Subjects to him; if he would make a League with them*. But the haughty *Ammonite*, in contempt of *Israel*, let them know, that if he made a *League* with them, the *Condition* thereof should be, *That they should come out to him, and let him thrust out all their Right Eyes; and lay it for a Reproach upon Israel*. The Elders of *Jabesh*, in this Streight, demanded *Seven Days Respite*; that they might send *Messengers* unto all the *Coasts of Israel*: and if in that time no *Succours* came, they would *submit*. This, it is thought, made the Elders of *Israel* press at that time so hard upon *Samuel* for a King. Whereas they should have *enquired of the Lord*, whom he, on that occasion, would appoint, to be, for that time, their *General*, to lead out their Forces against their Enemy. But they, as it seems, had a mind to be more *independent* of God.

When therefore *Samuel* saw they were so resolute, he again *consulted the Lord* about it. And the Lord bid him Answer their Desire, and make them a King. Whereupon he dismissed the Elders of *Israel*, bidding them go every one to his City; which implied, that he would take care of the Business. Thus God chastised his *Rebellious People* with a Rod of their own making: and told them by his Prophet, between Three and Four Hundred Years after, that *he gave them a King in his Anger*, *Hosea* 13. 11. Which yet is no Prejudice to Kingly Government, *rightly instituted, and duly administred*.

Since the setting up of a King at that time, was but to answer the Humour of a *Fickle People*, who wanted to have a *Topping Leader*, as their Neighbour Nations had; God fitted them with a goodly proper Man, one that was higher by the Head and Shoulders, than any of the rest of the People.

This was *Saul* the Son of *Kish*, a *Benjamite* of great Power whom ^{1 Sam. 9.} his Father had sent, with a Servant, to seek his *Asses*, which were strayed away. Such was, in that respect, the *Simplicity* of those Times, wherein great Men thought no Office mean, that was *Honest*.

When *Saul* and his Servant had passed through Mount *Ephraim*, and
 1 Sam. 9. through the Land of *Shalisha*, and through the Land of *Shalim*, (near un-
 to which *John* afterwards baptized, *Joh. 3. 23.*) and through the Land of
 the *Benjamites*, and were come to the Land of *Zuph* (where was *Ra-*
mathaim, *Zophim*, 1 Sam. 1. 1. the City of *Samuel*) and could hear no
 Tidings of them; *Saul* said to his Servant, *Come, let us return: lest*
my Father leave caring for the Asses; and take thought for us.

The Servant thereupon put him in mind, that there was in that City
 a Man of God, an honourable Man, in great Reputation; for that all
 he foretold, did surely come to pass. Now therefore, said he, Let
 us go thither: peradventure he can direct us which way to go to find the
 Asses.

Saul liked the Proposal well: but began to consider, what he had
 to give the Man of God, for his Counsel. *What have we*, said he to
 his Servant, *to make a Present for the Man of God?* for our Provisions
 are spent.

The Servant having searched his Purse, told his Master he had found
 there the fourth part of a Shekel of Silver; and he was willing to give
 the Man of God that, to tell them their way.

That was but a very small Sum, not above (*Three Pence Three Far-*
things;) yet that, it seems, was more than his Master (as near to the
 Kingdom as he was) had about him: and *Saul* being glad to hear of
 that, said to his Servant, *Well said, Come, let us go*; and on they went
 towards the City, where the Man of God dwelt.

As they went up the Hill that led to the City, they met young *Mai-*
dens, going out to draw Water; of whom they enquired, *if the Seer*
were there. For before-time in *Israel* when a Man would go to
 enquire of God, he used to say, *Come, and let us go to the Seer*: for
 he that was in *after-times* called *A Prophet*, was in *former times* called
 a *Seer*.

The Maidens told them he was there, being come thither but
 that day, to a Solemn Feast of the People in the High-place; and
 that if they made haste, they might straightway find him, before he
 went to the High-place to eat: for the People would not eat until
 he was come, and had blessed the Feast.

With this Information, *Saul* and his Servant went on; and when
 they were come into the City, *Samuel* came out and met them, as
 he was going up to the High-place. For the Lord had revealed to
Samuel, on the Day before, that about that time next Day he would
 send him a Man out of the Land of *Benjamin*, whom he should anoint
 Captain over *Israel*. And when *Samuel* now saw *Saul*, the Lord told
 him, *Behold the Man, whom I spake to thee of: this same shall reign*
over my People.

Now when *Saul* was come up to *Samuel*, not knowing him, he
 enquired of him for the Seer's House: And *Samuel* told him, *He was*
the Seer. Then inviting him to eat with him that Day, he bid him go
 up before him to the High-place: telling him, he would let him go
 to morrow; and would then tell him all that was in his Heart.

In the mean time he wisht him, not to trouble himself about the
Asses: for they were found. And to give him at present a little
 touch of the main Business, he added; *And on whom is all the Desire of*
Israel? Is it not on thee, and on all thy Father's House?

Saul, seeming to wonder that he should speak after that manner to
 him, desired him to consider, that he was a *Benjamite*, one of the small-
 est of the Tribes of *Israel*; (at least since the Slaughter that had been
 made upon them in the *Levite's* Case, *Judg. 20.*) and his Family the least
 of all the Families of that Tribe.

This

This Discourse *Samuel* brake off, by taking *Saul* and his Servant into the *Parlour* with him. Where setting them down, in the chief Place, among them that were invited to eat (which were about *Thirty Persons*;) he bid the *Cook* bring that Portion of Meat, which he had before ordered him to set by: who thereupon brought forth the *Shoulder*, and that which was upon it, (probably the *Breast*, those being the Two *Joynts* allotted for the *Priests* and their *Families*, *Levit.* 10. 14. and set it before *Saul*. 1 Sam. 9.

After they had eaten, and were come down from the High-place, into the City; *Samuel* taking *Saul* up upon the *Top* of the House (which was made *flat* to walk upon) had further Communication with him that Evening. And early next Morning calling him up, that he might send him away, they went out together: And as they were going down towards the end of the City, *Samuel* bid *Saul* order his Servant to pass on before, but stand still himself for a while, that he might shew him what God had said concerning him.

As soon as the Servant was gone out of Sight, *Samuel* taking a *Vial of Oil*, poured it upon the Head of *Saul*, and kissed him (which was a Token of Subjection and Homage to him, as his Sovereign) adding, that he did this, Because the Lord had Anointed him to be Captain over his Inheritance. This is supposed to fall about the Thirtieth Year of *Samuel's* Government. 1 Sam. 10.
A. M.
2917.

Then, to assure *Saul* that this thing was of the Lord, *Samuel* told him divers particular Passages, that should befall him that Day, as he went home. As, That he should find Two Men by *Rachel's Sepulchre*; who should tell him, the Asses he went to seek were found, and his Father was now in great Sorrow for him; that when he came to the Plain of *Tabor*, there should meet him Three Men, going up to God to *Beth-el*; one carrying Three Kids, another Three Loaves of Bread, and the third a Bottle of Wine; and that they should salute him and give him two Loaves of Bread, which he should receive; and that after that he should meet a Company of Prophets, coming down from the High-place, with a Psalter, and a Tabret, and a Pipe and a Harp before them; and that they should Prophecy; and that the Spirit of the Lord should come upon him, and he should prophecy with them, and should be turned into another Man. And (said *Samuel*) when these Signs are come unto thee, do thou as Occasion shall serve thee (behave thy self like a King) for God will be with thee.

As soon as *Saul* had turned his back, to go from *Samuel* onward of his way, the Lord gave him another Heart: and all those Signs, which *Samuel* had foretold him, came to pass that Day.

Now tho' *Samuel* had thus Anointed *Saul* privately, which no Man knew of, but themselves: yet for the general Satisfaction of the People, and that the Choice and Inauguration of their King, might be publick and solemn; he called them together unto the Lord to *Mizpeh*. To which Place the *Ark* of the Lord was brought, and the Priest was come with the *Urim* and *Thummim*, that the Choice might be openly made, and declared by casting of Lots before the Lord.

When the People were come to *Mizpeh*; and *Samuel* had again, in a short *Exproblatory* Speech, taxed them with Ingratitude to God, in rejecting him (who had been their Deliverer out of all their Adversities and Tribulations) and calling for a King to be set over them: he bid them present themselves before the Lord, by their Tribes, and by their Thousands.

When therefore all the Tribes of *Israel* were brought near, the Tribe of *Benjamin* was taken (that is, the Lot fell upon that Tribe.)
And

And when the Tribe of *Benjamin* came near by their Families, the Family of *Matri* was taken; and in that Family, *Saul* the Son *Kish* was taken. But tho' the Lot fell on him, they could not find him: for *he*, sure before-hand of the Office, had *absented* himself.

Enquiring thereupon further of the Lord, concerning him, whether he would come, or no? the Answer was, that he had hid himself among the Stuff.

Thither then they ran to fetch him; and having brought, and set him among them, he was *higher than all the People* from the Shoulders upwards. Which *Samuel* observing to them said, *See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen* (for tho' they chose a King, the Lord chose *the King*,) *that there is none like him, amongst all the People*: at which the People gave a general Shout, and cried, *God save the King*, or may the King live.

Then *Samuel*, as he had before told the People (*ch. 8. 11.*) what a King *would* do; now told them what their King *should* or ought to do: he told them the *Manner* of the Kingdom (probably out of *Deut. 17.*) and he wrote it in a Book, and laid it up before the Lord. Which done, he dismissed the People.

Saul also went home to *Gibeab*: and a Band of Men, whose Hearts God had touched, and inclined thereunto, waited on him home. But the Children of *Belial* (the *Mob*, or more unruly part of the People) despised him, saying in contempt, *How shall this Man save us?* Neither would they bring him any *Present*, as an Acknowledgment, that he was their King. However, he discreetly overlookt it, as if he had not heard them.

By this time the Messengers, which the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead* had sent abroad, to acquaint their Brethren with the Distress they were in, were come to *Gibeab* of *Saul*; and had told the Tidings in the Ears of the People: which made them *all lift up their Voices and weep*.

Which when *Saul* observed, who at that time was coming out of the Field, and (notwithstanding his *Regality*,) driving an *Herd* of Cattle before him; he asked, What ailed the People, that they wept? And being told the Streight that the Men of *Jabesh* were in, *the Spirit of the Lord came upon him*; and his Anger being greatly kindled against the *insolent Ammonites*, he took a Yoke of Oxen, and hewing them in Pieces, sent them with speed throughout all the Coasts of *Israel*, with this short but sharp Message: *Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul, and after Samuel*, (for the Young King thought it advisable to strengthen his Authority, with the Name, and Company of the Old Prophet) *so shall it be done unto his Oxen*.

Hereupon the *Fear of the Lord* fell upon the People, and they came out as one Man: so that when they were mustered, the Children of *Israel* were *Three Hundred Thousand*, and the Men of *Judah*, (who bordering on the *Philistines*, could not so well spare Men from their Frontiers) were *Thirty Thousand*.

When *Saul* and *Samuel* saw their Strength, they bid the Messengers which came from *Jabesh-Gilead*, go back and tell their Citizens, That to morrow, by that time the Sun was hot, they should have Help.

This good News made them glad. And that they might contribute to their own Deliverance, by making the *Ammonites* secure, they sent them Word, that to morrow they would come out to them, to be dealt with as they pleased.

But on the morrow, *Saul*, having divided the People into *Three Companies*, that he might give the Onset in *Three Places*, fell into the midst of the *Ammonitish* Host, in the Morning Watch; and slew them
until

until the Heat of the Day : and such of them, as escaped the Slaughter, were so scattered, that there were not Two of them left together.

1 Sam. 11.

This great Victory, and so great a Deliverance thereby from so cruel and insulting a Foe, was an encouraging Beginning to the New King and his Favourites : some of whom, calling to remembrance, that some others had before spoken *despitefully* of Saul, said now to Samuel, *Who is he that said, shall Saul reign over us? Bring the Men, that we may put them to Death.* But Saul wisely and generously answered, *There shall not a Man be put to Death this Day: for to Day the Lord hath wrought Salvation in Israel.* Implying that such Days, being times of Festivity and Joy, should not be clouded with sadning Executions.

Samuel, willing to take away all *Animosities* from among the People and to give Opportunity to those who before had *stood out*, to come in now, and receive Saul for their King; proposed to the People, that they should go to *Gilgal*, and *renew* the Kingdom there: that is, proclaim their King there *anew*. Accordingly to *Gilgal* all the People went, and there before the Lord they *unanimously* made Saul King: Which done, they sacrificed *Sacrifices of Peace-offerings* before the Lord; and both King and People rejoiced together greatly.

But a little to *allay* their Joy, Samuel took occasion (some say here at *Gilgal*, others think before they went from *Jabesh*) to expostulate again with them with respect both to his own *Administration*, while he was in the *Government*: and to their Offence in altering the Government.

With respect to himself, he put them in mind, that he had answered them in every thing they had asked of him; and (as they now saw) had made them a King, according to their Desire. And inasmuch as he himself was now grown old and grey-headed, and his Sons were *not now over them*, as heretofore, but *with them as Fellow-Subjects* to their King, there was nothing to awe them; but that they might freely impeach him if they could, he having been conversant amongst them from his very Childhood.

1 Sam. 12.

As a *Challenge* therefore to them all, to convict him, if they could, he said, *Behold, here I am; Witness against me before the Lord, and before his Anointed. Whose Ox, or Ass, have I taken, or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? Or of whom have I received a Bribe, to blind mine Eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.*

They answered, *Thou hast not defrauded nor oppressed us; neither hast thou taken ought of any Man's Hand.* They might have reminded him of his Sons *taking Bribes*, and perverting Judgment: but since they knew he knew it (for they had told him of it before, *ch. 8. 3.*) they modestly forbore to repeat it.

Then calling God and the King to witness, that they had acquitted him; and they acknowledging it: he went on to reason with them, concerning the Righteous Acts of the Lord, which he had done to their Fathers and to them; recounting to them, how the Lord had advanced *Moses* and *Aaron*, and by their *Conduct* had brought up their Fathers out of *Egypt*: That being provoked by their *Disobedience*, to sell them into the Hand of *Sisera* (King *Jabin's* Captain) and of the *Philistines*, and of the King of *Moab*; when they repented, confessed their Sins, and cried to the Lord, he delivered them by *Jerub-Baal* (whose proper Name was *Gideon*) and by *Bedan* (whom some take to be *Samson*, others *Fair*) by *Jephthah*, and by *himself*. Notwithstanding which, they no sooner saw *Nabash* the King of *Ammon*, coming against them;

them; but they came unto him, and told him, they would have a King to reign over them: when as the Lord their God was their rightful King.

Having thus briefly opened to them their Offence; he tells them that, notwithstanding all this, *If they will fear the Lord, and serve him, and obey his Voice; and not rebel against the Commandment of the Lord,* both they, and also their King that reigned over them, should continue following the Lord their God: but if they will not obey the Voice of the Lord, but rebel against his Commandment; then shall the Hand of the Lord be against them, as it was against their Fathers.

And to assure them, that he spake not this to them of his own Head, or from a *Personal Disgust*, or Offence of Mind; but from the Lord: he told them the Lord would give them a *convincing Evidence*. For whereas it was then *Wheat-Harvest*, and very fine Harvest-weather, *I will call*, (said he) *unto the Lord, and he will send Thunder and Rain;* that you may see your Wickedness is great, in the Sight of the Lord, in asking you a King.

Accordingly, upon Samuel's Praying, *the Lord sent Thunder and Rain that Day;* which made the People greatly fear the Lord and Samuel. And they came all to Samuel, saying, *Pray for thy Servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not: for unto all our Sins we have added this Evil; to ask us a King.*

Samuel exhorted them, that though they had *done amiss*, yet they should not cease from following the Lord; but should serve the Lord with all their Heart: and not turn aside after the Gods of the Nations; which being but vain Idols, could neither deliver, nor profit them. And withal he encouraged them not to *despair* of Mercy: for since it had pleased the Lord to make them his People, he would not forsake them, for his great Name's sake, if they did not forsake him. As for himself, he assured them, that he would not only incessantly pray for them, as he held it his *Duty* to do: but would teach them the good and *right* Way; which was *to fear the Lord, and serve him in Truth*, with all their Heart; considering how great Things he had done for them. Yet that they might not grow too secure, he left this Lesson at parting; *But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your King.*

^{1 Sam. 13.} Jonathan, the Eldest Son of Saul, was left, it seems, *to guard the Frontiers*, when his Father went against the *Ammonites*. And being a *courageous Prince*, full of *youthful Heat*, and desirous of *Martial Honour*, he had fallen upon a *Garrison* of the *Philistines*, planted upon a *Neighbouring Hill*, and smitten them.

Of this the *Philistines* soon had notice, and resolving to revenge the Injury, raised an Army, consisting of *Thirty Thousand Chariots*, *Six Thousand Horse-men*, and an infinite Number of Foot: with which they came up, and pitched in *Michmash* Eastward from *Beth-aven*, to fight with *Israel*.

The *Israelites* also, having heard of this Exploit of Jonathan's, and how enraged the *Philistines* were, for that cause against them, were by Sound of Trumpet, gathered together to Saul at *Gilgal*.

When Samuel had Anointed Saul privately, *Chap. 10. 1.* he counselled him to go to *Gilgal*, and tarry there *Seven Days*, till he came to him; promising to come to him there, both to offer *Burnt-offerings*, &c. And to shew him what he should do, *Ver. 8.*

Saul lay now encamped at *Gilgal*, expecting Samuel every Day. But he not coming when they looked for him, the People quite discouraged by the Absence of the Prophet, which they took for an *inauspicious Omen*, did generally forsake their new, and so much desired King; shifting

shifting every one for himself. And so greatly did the Fear of the *Philistines* prevail upon them, that most of them hid themselves; some^{1 Sam. 13.} in *Caves*, some in *Thickets*, some in *Rocks*, in *High-places* some, and some in *Pits*: and some not thinking themselves safe any where, on that side *Jordan*, went over to their Brethren, on the other side the River.

Reduced to this Extremity, and out of hopes now of *Samuel's* Coming, *Saul* called for a Burnt-offering, and Peace-offering, and offered the Burnt-offering. Which he had no sooner done, but *Samuel* came: of whose Coming, *Saul* having notice, went forth to meet and salute him.

Samuel immediately askt him what he had done? Unto whom *Saul* relating both what he had done, and the Reason why; *Samuel* strait told him he *had done foolishly*: charging him, that he had not kept the Commandment of the Lord his God, which he had commanded him; which if he had done, the Lord would have established his Kingdom over *Israel* for ever: Whereas now *his Kingdom should not continue*: for that the Lord had fought him a Man *after his own Heart*, to be Captain over his People.

This severe Reproof, and downright Charge of having broke the Lord's Command, would make one doubt that *Saul* had not waited the full time of Seven Days, for *Samuel's* Coming, according to Appointment, but had offered the Burnt-offering *before those Seven Days were out*; and that *Samuel* had come within the time: but that the Text is so exprefs, *ver. 8.* That he *tarried Seven Days*, according to the set time that *Samuel* had appointed; but *Samuel came not*, &c.

Whatever was the Cause of this Delay in *Samuel*; whether it was *accidental*, or *design'd* for a Tryal to the New King: yet certainly it gave him an unhappy Trip, and made him *stumble* at the very *Threshold* of his Government.

Samuel upon this, departing from *Gilgal*, gat him up to *Gibeab* of *Benjamin*. Whither also *Saul*, with his Son *Jonathan*, soon after led those few that stuck to him; who upon a Muster, were found to be but Six Hundred Men, and those but ill provided. For the *Philistines* (that the *Hebrews* might not make themselves Swords or Spears) had taken care before, that there should not be a *Smith* found throughout all the Land of *Israel*. So that the poor *Israelites* (while the *Philistines* had Dominion over them) were fain to go down to them for their *Smithing-work* in Husbandry, to sharpen their *Plough-shares*, *Coulters*, *Axes*, *Mattocks*; when they were grown too blunt to be whetted with a *File*.

Here then was an Army, in a manner without Arms: for, it seems, not a Man of them had Sword or Spear, but *Saul* himself, and *Jonathan* his Son. Yet may not this be so understood, as if there were no more Arms in *Israel*, or among the *Israelites*: for, notwithstanding all the Politick Caution of the *Philistines* to prevent it, the *Israelites* no doubt had Arms, tho' they kept them privately. How else could they, but just before, have made such a Slaughter of the *Ammonites* at *Jabesh-Gilead*, *ch. 11. 11*? Where also, if any of them had wanted Arms, they might have furnished themselves from the slain. May it not therefore be supposed, that these few that staid with *Saul* (in so great a *Fright* that they *trembled* again, *ch. 13. 7.*) as well as the rest that had run away and hid themselves, *ver. 6.* had laid aside their Weapons, that they might not be found in Arms by the *Philistines*.

Mean while the *Avaunt-guard* of the *Philistines* sallied out of their Camp in Three Bodies, directing their Courses three several Ways. But their main Body, or Standing Army, reached to the Streights, or narrow Passage of *Michmash*.

Jona-

Jonathan observing this, and weighing with himself the extream Danger *Israel* was in; filled with *Heroick Valour*, and a Religious Confidence in God, he left his Father under a *Pomegranate-Tree*, in *Micron* (which signifies *Fear*) with about Six Hundred Faint-hearted Soldiers, and *Abiah* the Priest: and withdrew himself privately from the Army, attended only by the Young Man that bear his Armour; to whom alone he imparted his Intention. And directing his Course towards the Place where the Enemy lay, he said to his Armour-bearer, *Come, Let us go over unto the Camp, or Garrison of these Uncircumcised. It may be the Lord will work for us: for there is no Restraint to the Lord, to work by many, or by few.* His Armour-bearer encouraged him; wishing him to go on, and do all that was in his Heart: assuring him that he would not fail to follow him.

1 Sam. 14.
A. M.
2919.

Whereupon *Jonathan* proposed the Enterpise thus, *We will pass over, said he, so near unto these Men, that we may discover our selves to them. And if when they see us, They shall say unto us, Tarry till we come to you, then we will tarry indeed, and not go up to them: but if they should say, Come unto us, then we will go up; and this shall be for a Sign unto us, that the Lord hath delivered them into our Hand.*

Thus resolved, they went on, until they were discovered by the *Philistines* Garrison, or Out-guards; who at first sight of them, cried out, in Derision, *Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the Holes, where they had hid themselves.* But quickly some of the Soldiers calling to them, said, *Come up to us, and we'll shew you a Thing.* This so aptly answering the Sign before proposed, did greatly animate *Jonathan*.

The way by which they were to pass was both very steep, and very streight, or narrow, having a sharp Rock on either side: yet *Jonathan*, full of Faith and Courage, bidding his Armour-bearer come up after him, climb'd up, as well and as fast as he could, on his Hands and his Feet; And his Armour-bearer followed him. And being got up, they shewed the *Philistines* a Thing: for they fell so furiously upon the Out-guards, that in a little time, and little space of Ground, they slew about Twenty of the *Philistines*.

So bold an Onset, so successfully carried on, might well, as it did, startle the secure and confident *Philistines*. But the Terror which thereupon the Lord struck them with, ran so universally throughout the Host, and seized so deeply on them, that a great Trembling possessed them all; and the very Earth trembled also: for it was a Trembling sent from God. And in this Fright that possessed the *Philistines*, they fell foul one upon another; and every Man's Sword was against his Fellow.

Mean while *Saul's* Sentinels, who stood in *Gibeah*, to watch the Motion of the *Philistines*, observing the Multitude there to grow thinner, and that they knocked one another down, acquainted *Saul* therewith. Who thereupon, suspecting some attempt had been made by some of his Men upon the *Philistines*, which might engage the Armies; ordered the People with him to be numbred, that he might know who was gone. And finding *Jonathan* and his Armour-bearer missing; he called in haste for the Priest, to bring the Ark of the Lord, that he might ask Counsel what they should do. But while he was yet speaking to the Priest about it, the Noise and Tumult encreasing in the *Philistines* Host; he bid the Priest Stop: being loth, it seems, to lose so much time, from falling in upon the disordered *Philistines*, as the asking Counsel of the Lord would take up.

Wherefore drawing forth, with all speed, his Men to the Battel, and the Hebrews on all sides flocking in; as well they that had hid themselves in Mount *Ephraim*, as they that for shelter had fled before to the *Philistines*

Philistines Camp: they all flew in now to join with *Israel* against the *Philistines*, who themselves were busied in killing one another. And there being, by that means, opportunity enough, for the unarmed, or ill-armed *Israelites*, to arm themselves sufficiently, with the Weapons of the Slaughtered *Philistines*, they gave the *Philistines* a very great overthrow: and so the Lord saved *Israel* that Day. 1 Sam. 14

The just Joy for so great a Deliverance was somewhat *abated*, at least interrupted, by an *unhappy* Accident. *Saul*, when he perceived the *Philistines* in Disorder, killing one another in their Camp; before he drew out his Men to the Battel, caused Proclamation to be made in his Camp, by which he adjured his Men to fast till Evening: adding this Execration, *Cursed be the Man that eateth any Food until the Evening; That I may be avenged on mine Enemies.*

This, it seems, he did, to restrain the People from falling too soon upon the Booty, and feasting themselves with the Enemies Provisions; whereby they might lose the Opportunity of obtaining a Compleat and full Victory. And had he done this by a bare Command, without an Execration added, his Policy therein had not, perhaps, been much amiss.

But having made a wrong Step before (for which he had been reproved by the Prophet) he went on now in his own Will, following the Dictates of his own Mind, without asking Counsel of the Lord, which he ought to have done; and which (as a known Duty) he was about to have done, when he called the Priest to bring the Ark of God: but through a preposterous haste, fearing to lose time by staying to enquire of God, stopt the Priest again; bidding him withdraw his Hand.

However, by this Charge he defeated his own purpose; hindring that which he would have effected, and missing that which he would have obtained.

For the People for want of Sustenance (having probably through fear, and continual watching, fasted too long before) were by this time grown so feeble, that they were not able to pursue the *Philistines*; as they might have done, had they took some short Refection: which gave Opportunity to many of the *Philistines* to escape by Flight, who otherwise must have fallen into their Hands.

But this was not all the Mischief that attended this execrable Charge. For *Jonathan*, being gone from the Camp before that Charge was given, knew nothing of it. And coming with his Men to a Wood, where Honey dropped, and lay upon the Ground; he, as he passed along, dipped the end of his Staff in the Honey, and put it to his Mouth. The rest of the People, tho' very weary and faint, would not touch a drop of the Honey; fearing the Curse, wherewith *Saul* had bound them.

Jonathan was probably as faint as they, if not more, having been longer engaged in the Action; so that his Sight was grown weak thro' faintness: but upon this little Refreshment, his Strength returned, and his Eyes grew vigorous.

It is reasonable to think, That observing the Backwardness of the People, *Jonathan* might invite them to eat of the Honey, that they might be refreshed, as well as he; because the Text says, (ver. 28.) One of the People answered, and said, Thy Father straightly charged the People with an Oath, saying, Cursed be the Man, that eateth any Food this Day.

When *Jonathan* heard this, he was troubled; not for himself: for he knew, that Curse could not reach him; who neither consented to it, nor knew of it. But he was troubled that his Father, by that rash Oath, had hindred the compleating of so great, and eminent a Deliverance. Neither could he contain himself from saying, *My Father hath*

troubled the Land. For see, I pray you, said he, how mine Eyes
 1 Sam. 14. (which through *Faintness* were grown weak and dim) have been *en-*
lightened (that is, have recovered their Strength) since I tasted a little
 of this Honey: how much more, if haply the People had eaten free-
 ly to Day, of the Spoil of their Enemies, which they found? For
 had there not been now a much greater Slaughter amongst the *Phi-*
listines?

Whether the People took Encouragement from the Words and Example
 of *Jonathan*, to satisfy their Hunger as soon as they could; or whether,
 which is most probable, they tarried till Evening (for they were after-
 wards taxed for eating Flesh *with the Blood*, not for eating *within*
the time prohibited :) they being *sharpset* flew upon the Spoil; and seiz-
 ing on Sheep, Oxen and Calves, flew them on the Ground, where the
 Blood could not well drain from them: and not having patience to
 stay, till the Blood could be thoroughly drawn out, they fell greedily
 on, and *eat the Flesh with the Blood in it*. This being told to *Saul*,
 expressed some Zeal against this Evil; and calling for a great Stone to be
 brought him, he raised an Altar unto the Lord: and commanded the
 People to bring every one his Ox, and his Sheep thither, and flay
 them there, that the Blood might be well pressed out; which they
 did.

After the People had satisfied themselves with Food, *Saul* proposed
 to renew the Pursuit after the Enemy; saying, Let us go down after
 the *Philistines* by Night, and spoil them until the Morning light: and
 let us not leave a Man of them.

The People expressing their Readiness; the Priest interposed, advising
 them to consult the Lord first. Whereupon *Saul* asked Counsel of
 God, whether he should go down after the *Philistines*? and whether he
 would deliver them into the Hand of *Israel*? But the Lord did not
 vouchsafe to answer him that Day.

This made *Saul* uneasy. And being willing to impute this Repulse
 to a Breach of his Charge, given before about not eating; he resolved
 to have the Lot cast, that he might thereby find who had broken his
 Command: Swearing by an High Oath [*As the Lord liveth, that saveth*
Israel,] that if it should prove to be his Son *Jonathan*, he should surely
 die.

The People (who generally knew that *Jonathan* had tasted of the
 Honey) were so astonished at this *dangerous* Oath, that they made him
 no Answer. But the Elders being gathered together, *Saul* appointed
 them, with the People, to stand on the one side, and he, with his Son
Jonathan, stood on the other side: as the Two Parties upon one of
 which the *general Lot* must fall.

Then addressing himself to God, he implored him to give a *perfect*
Lot. So we read the *English Text*: but the Margin says, *To shew*
the Innocent.

Upon the casting of the Lots, the People were acquitted: and the
 Doubt lay between *Saul* and *Jonathan*. Whereupon the Lot being
 cast again, between them Two; it fell upon *Jonathan*: by which
 (say *Tremellius* and *Junius* on the Place) *The Innocent was shewed*.

Saul then asking him what he had done; *Jonathan* answered, I did
 but taste a little Honey with the end of the Rod (or Staff) that was in
 my Hand: and must I die for it? *Saul* thereupon swore again, God do so,
 and more also; for *thou shalt surely die, Jonathan*.

At that the People began to rouse. And expostulating the Matter
 with *Saul*, said, Shall *Jonathan* die, who hath wrought this great Salva-
 tion in *Israel*? God forbid. And that they might be as positive as
 Saul

Saul had been; they using the *same Form* of Words which he had used, said; *As the Lord liveth, there shall not an Hair of his Head fall to the Ground* (that is, he shall not suffer any thing at all, how little soever:) *for he hath wrought with God this Day.* So the People rescued Jonathan, that he died not. And Saul, leaving the Pursuit of the Philistines, gave them Opportunity to get back to their own Country. 1 Sam. 14.

Upon this, it is said, *Saul took the Kingdom over Israel*, ver. 47. From which Words some think, that the *Two Years* wherein he is said to have reigned, chap. 13. 1. was all the time that he reigned *lawfully*; and that after that, declining from that *manner* of Ruling, which from the Lord Samuel had prescribed, and recorded in a Book, chap. 10. 25. He governed *arbitrarily* by a standing Force.

And it may not be unlikely that he, who was a *jealous Prince*, and always regardful of his own Safety; observing how *dear his Son was to the People*, might not think himself altogether out of danger of being *dethroned*: and therefore took what measures he thought best, to secure the Kingdom to himself; Of which he, a *Soldier*, might probably judge a *Standing Army* the likeliest.

Nor wanted he occasions for raising one, and for keeping it up when raised: for he had Wars on all Hands, and fought against all his Enemies on every side; against *Moab*, and *Ammon*, and *Edom*, and the Kings of *Zebah*, and the *Philistines*, against whom he had War all his Days. For he was indeed a *Martial Prince*, and *loved a Soldier*: and therefore when he met with any Man that *excelled in Strength* or *Valour*, he took him into his Service.

Nor was he yet so much *out of Favour*, but that altho' he had *missed his way*, in his former Enterprize against the *Philistines*; the Lord would employ him again in another Expedition, that he might have opportunity to *recover himself*, and make some amends for his former *Slip*.

It was not long therefore before the Prophet Samuel came to him again, with a Message from the Lord. Which yet before he delivered, that Saul might the more heedfully regard what he had to say, he thus introduced.

The Lord sent me to anoint thee, to be King over his People, even over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the Voice of the Words of the Lord. 1 Sam. 15.

Having thus prefaced to quicken his Attention, he delivered his Message in these Words.

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel: how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go, and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have. Spare them not: but slay both Man and Woman, Infant and Suckling, Ox and Sheep, Camel and Ass.

How sharp soever this Message might be thought: yet it was so plain, that there could not be any possibility of mistaking it. Sharp indeed it may seem to be; especially if it be considered, that it was executed upon a Nation, for a Fact committed above *Four Hundred Years* before: and for which too the Aggressors were *then punished*, in their own Persons, *Exod. 17. 13.* Which shews God's *Faithfulness* and *Love* to his People: and that *first* or *last* he will avenge their Cause. Yet has it not been *sharp enough* to deter the Enemies of God's People, in succeeding Ages, from *lying in wait* against them, or otherwise oppressing them.

Saul

^{1 Sam. 15.} Saul having received the Message, made no *Hesitation*. But forthwith gathering his Forces together, marched forth against *Amalek*, with a very great Army, consisting of *Two Hundred and Ten Thousand Men*.

But before he committed any Act of Hostility, finding the *Kenites* (of the Posterity of *Jethro*, *Moses* his Father-in-law) dwelling among the *Amalekites*; he remembered, and acknowledged to them, that they, (that is, their *Ancestors*) had shewn *Kindness* to the Children of *Israel*, when they came up out of *Egypt*: and therefore he warned them to speed away, and depart from among the *Amalekites*; lest, in the common Fate of War, he should destroy them with the *Amalekites*. And here is an Instance of *Kindness return'd*, for *Kindness received* as long before, as the *Amalekites* *Trespas*s was.

The *Kenites* took his Counsel, and got out of the way. And then fell *Saul* upon the *Amalekites*, and smote them so, that it is said, *He utterly destroyed all the People with the edge of the Sword*. Which had he done indeed, neither had *Ziklag* been afterwards sacked, and burnt by the *Amalekites* (*chap. 30.*) Nor had *Saul himself* been slain by the Hand of an *Amalekite*, (*2 Sam. 1. 8. and 10.*) But it may be supposed he killed all he met with, or found; except the King of the *Amalekites*, whose Title was *Agag*.

Him he took alive, and purposely spared, because he was their King; whom perhaps, for that very Reason, he ought to have shewn least Favour unto. Not because he was a King; but because he was their King. For as they now suffered for the Treachery and Cruelty of their *Ancestors*: so it is reasonable to suppose, that the *Agag*, or King of the *Amalekites*, who then ruled, when they did that Despite to *Israel*, was more deeply guilty of both plotting and executing that Design against *Israel*, than any private or single *Amalekite* could be. But *Saul*, a King, was willing to save this King, tho' against the express Command of the King of Kings.

This was part of *Saul's* Transgression: but this was not all. For besides the King, *Saul* and the People (for upon them he laid it, and they are joined together) spared the best of the Sheep, and of the Oxen, of the fat Beasts, and the Lambs; and indeed of all that was good: and would not destroy them. But every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly: notwithstanding the Command was so plain and express, to smite *Amalek*, and utterly destroy all that they had; that it admitted of no Reserve, either of Person or Thing.

Before *Samuel* could have notice of this, either by Messenger, or Report, he had it from the Lord; who so highly resented this *inexcusable* Disobedience of *Saul*, (that expressing himself after the manner of Men) he said to *Samuel*, *It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be King*: for he is turned back from following me; and hath not performed my Commandments. This so grieved *Samuel*, that he cried unto the Lord all Night: no doubt on behalf of *Saul* and his People.

Early next Morning gat *Samuel* up to meet *Saul*; And understanding that he was come up to *Carmel*, where he had made an Halt to refresh his Men: and was passed on, and gone down to *Gilgal*; he followed him thither, and there he found him.

At their first Congress, *Saul* very briskly said to *Samuel*, *Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the Commandment of the Lord*, Ay! said *Samuel*, what meaneth then the Bleating of the Sheep in mine Ears? and the Lowing of the Oxen, which I hear?

They have brought them, said *Saul*, from the *Amalekites*: for the People spared the best of the Sheep and of the Oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

Stay,

Stay, said Samuel then to Saul, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said to me this Night. Saul bidding him say on; Samuel proceeded, ^{1 Sam. 15.} and said.

When thou wast little in thine own Sight, wast thou not made the Head of the Tribes of Israel? And did not the Lord Anoint thee King over Israel? And the Lord sent thee on a Journey, and said, Go, and utterly destroy the Sinners, the Amalekites; and fight against them until they be consumed. Wherefore then didst thou not obey the Voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the Spoil, and didst Evil in the sight of the Lord?

Saul still justifying himself, said, Yea, I have obeyed the Voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me; and have brought Agag the King of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites: but it was the People that took of the Spoil, Sheep and Oxen, the chief of the Things which should have been utterly destroyed, to Sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal.

Ha; replied Samuel, Hath the Lord as great delight in Burnt-offerings and in Sacrifices, as in having his Voice obeyed? Behold, to obey, is better than Sacrifice: and to hearken, than the Fat of Rams. For Rebellion, (added he) is as the Sin of Witchcraft: and Stubbornness is as Iniquity and Idolatry. Wherefore, now Saul, hear thy Doom. Because thou hast rejected the Word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being King.

Saul bore up against Samuel till now: nor did he seem concerned at any thing he had said before. But these last Words of his being rejected from the Kingdom, toucht him to the quick. At this, he presently cried out, I have sinned. And confessed he had transgressed the Commandment of the Lord, and the Words of the Prophet: yet would have excused himself on pretence he had done it for fear of the People, and to answer their Desire. And having perfunctorily desired him to pardon his Sin, he asked him to accompany him that he might worship the Lord. But Samuel refused to go with him; and gave him this Reason for it: thou hast rejected the Word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being King over Israel.

Then, as Samuel turned about to be gone, Saul, to stay him, caught hold on the Skirt of his Mantle; and it rent. Whereupon Samuel took occasion to tell him, The Lord had rent the Kingdom of Israel from him; and had given it to a Neighbour of his, that was better than he. This Neighbour, as it appeared soon after, was David; tho' Samuel did not then know who it should be: but spake, as a Prophet, by Divine Direction.

And to assure Saul, that he spake this, (not of himself, but) from the Lord, and thereby to impress the Sense thereof the deeper in him, he added; And also, the Strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent: for (tho' he speak to Man according to Man's Capacity) yet he is not a Man, that he should repent.

Saul was not so sensibly touched with any thing, as the mention of his losing the Kingdom. And he seemed apprehensive, that Samuel's refusing to go with him, and joyn with him in the Worship of God, would lessen his Esteem with the People, and alienate the Affections of his Courtiers from him. Therefore acknowledging again that he had sinned, he added, yet, honour me now, I pray thee, before the Elders of my People, and before Israel; and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord thy God. Samuel thereupon (having another piece of Service yet to do, which perhaps he knew not, or thought not of before) turned after Saul: and Saul performed his Devotions.

Then called Samuel for Agag, the King of the *Amalekites*, to be brought to him. The *Captive King*, expecting to have a favourable Reception from an old Man and a Prophet, came pleasantly forward, saying, *surely the Bitterness of Death is past*. But he soon found his Mistake. For Samuel, without using any Ceremony, or saying any more to him, than, *As thy Sword hath made Women Childless, so shall thy Mother be Childless among Women*: fell on him; and hewed him in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal.

1 Sam. 15.
A. M.
2920.

This was (if I may so say) the Sacrifice Samuel went back with Saul to offer; which Saul little thought of, and having performed this Service, Samuel departed to his own House at Ramah: and Saul to his at Gibeah of Saul. After which, Samuel never came more to see Saul: yet could not forbear to mourn for him.

For this the Lord gave him a gentle Reproof; asking him, *How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel*. Then bidding him fill his Horn with Oil, Go (said he) I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I have provided me a King among his Sons.

1 Sam. 16.

Tho' Samuel had before told Saul, that God had rejected him, had rent the Kingdom from him, and had given it to a Neighbour of his, more worthy than he (Words provoking enough to an angry Martial King;) and did it boldly, without shew of Fear: yet now, when he was bid go and Anoint that other; the Sense of the Danger startled the Prophet. Alas! said he, *how can I go? If Saul hear it, he will kill me*.

The Lord knowing the sincerity of his Prophet, overlookt the Frailty of his Nature; and kindly proposed him an Expedient, to remove at once both the Danger, and his Fear, Take, said he, *an Heifer with thee, and say, I am come to Sacrifice* (to offer a Peace-offering, or hold a Feast) *to the Lord*. And call Jesse to the Feast, and I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt Anoint unto me him whom I shall then name unto thee.

Samuel following the Lord's Direction, went to Beth-lehem: but his coming thither in that manner, put the Elders of the Town into a great Fear. They doubted some grievous Crime had been committed, which he came to enquire into; and asked him, *If he came peaceably?* He answered, yea; And told them, he was come to hold a Feast unto the Lord. (For Sacrifice, in a strict and proper Sense, as a Burnt-offering for Sin, might not be offered, by the Law, in any other Place than before the Ark: but Peace-offerings and Feasts might.) Therefore he bid them sanctify, or prepare themselves, and come with him to the Sacrifice or Feast; and he sanctified Jesse and his Sons, and invited them to it.

Now when Samuel was come into Jesse's House, and saw his Sons about him; he quickly fixt his Eye upon Eliab: who was the Eldest Son, and a proper Man; fit, in his Judgment, to succeed so tall a Man as Saul. Concluding therefore him to be the Man, he said, (probably in himself) *Surely the Lord's Anointed is before him*. But the Lord checking Samuel, said, *Look not on his Countenance, nor on the height of his Stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as Men seeth; for Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the Heart*.

Jesse (unto whom, it is probable, Samuel had opened the Cause and End of his coming) seeing Eliab set aside, called Abinadab, his Second Son, and made him pass before Samuel. Who warned by his former Mistake, would not now trust to his own Judgment; but kept to his sure Guide, the Voice of the Lord within: by which instructed, he

he said, *Neither hath the Lord chosen this* (tho' his Name signified, amongst other Things, a *Prince*. Then *Jesse* made *Shamma*, his Third Son, to pass by (whose Name signifies Desolation or Perdition:) and of him also *Samuel* said, *Neither hath the Lord chosen this*. Thus *Jesse* made seven of his Sons to pass before *Samuel*: and none of them was the right. 1 Sam. 16.

Samuel thereupon asked *Jesse*, if there were all his Children? *Jesse* told him, there was one more, the Youngest of them all: but he was abroad, keeping the Sheep, *Send then*, said *Samuel*, and fetch him: for we will not sit down (to the Feast) till he come hither.

Jesse therefore sent, and brought him in: a goodly Youth he was to look at, of a ruddy Complexion, and beautiful Countenance. And as soon as he was come in, the Lord said to *Samuel*, *Arise, Anoint him: for this is he*. *Samuel* then taking the Horn of Oil, Anointed him in the midst of his Brethren. And from that Day forward the Spirit of the Lord came upon *David*: but the Spirit of the Lord departed from *Saul*; and an Evil Spirit from the Lord troubled and terrified him: for all Spirits, Evil as well as Good, are at God's Command.

A. M.
2921.

Now when *Saul's* Servants saw how he was vexed with that Evil Spirit, they told him, that if, when the Evil Spirit from God was upon him, he had a skilful Harper to play before him with his Harp, he would be well, or have Ease: and therefore they desired him to give Order, that they might seek out such a Man. Which he consenting to, One of them told him, He had seen a Son of *Jesse* the *Beth-lehemite*, who was cunning in playing, and a mighty Valiant Man; a Man of War, Prudent in Matters, and a Comely Person: and withal, that the Lord was with him.

Upon this Recommendation, *Saul* sent Messengers to *Jesse*, requiring him to send him *David* his Son, who was with the Sheep. Whereupon *Jesse*, lading an Ass with Bread, and a Bottle of Wine and a Kid, sent them as a Present, by *David* to *Saul*. And thenceforward, when the Evil Spirit from God was upon *Saul*, *David* took an Harp, and playing upon it, so refreshed *Saul*; that the Evil Spirit departed from him, and he was well.

This procured *David* great Love from *Saul*: so that he was loth to part with him again. And therefore he sent to *Jesse*, saying, Let *David* I pray thee, stand before me: for he hath found Favour in my Sight. And he made *David* his Armour-bearer.

By this time the *Philistines* having rallied their scattered Troops, and recruited their Forces, drew forth their Armies again, to repair their former Losses and Dishonour, and revenge themselves upon the *Israelites*. And marching to *Shochob*, which belonged to *Judah*, they pitched between *Shochob* and *Azekah*, in the Coast of *Dammim*. Whereupon *Saul* drew forth his Forces also, and encamped by the Valley of *Elah* (or the Oak:) so that the *Philistines* Camp was planted upon one Mountain, and the *Israelites* Camp upon another; having a Valley between them. 1 Sam. 17.

While thus the Two Armies stood facing each other, there sallied forth of the *Philistines* Camp a Champion, of prodigious Stature, whose Name was *Goliath*, and he was of *Gath*. His Height was Six Cubits and a Span. Which (taking the measure here by the Common Cubit, which in *Deut.* 3. 11. is called the Cubit of a Man, and is generally held to contain Half a Yard) renders him Three Yards, or Nine Foot high, and a Span, which some make to be Twelve Inches.

He is a tall Man reckoned now a-days, that measures Two Yards, or Six Foot: But *Goliath* was half so much more, and a Span over. And yet

yet, if we may guess at the Stature of Og King of Bashan, from
 1 Sam. 17. the Dimensions of his Iron Bedstead which was Nine Cubits, that is,
 Four Yards and a Half, or Thirteen Foot and an Half long, Deut. 3. 11.
 he seems to have been a greater Monster than this.

Proportionable to his Height, we may suppose the Giant's Bulk and Strength to be, by the weight of his Armour. For besides an Helmet of Brass, he was armed in a Coat of Mail; the weight whereof was Five Thousand Shekels of Brass: which in a Marginal Note to one of our English Bibles, is computed to be An Hundred Fifty and Six Pounds, and Four Ounces. His Legs were guarded with Greaves (or Boots) of Brass: and for Defence of his Neck, he had a Target of Brass between his Shoulders. The Staff of his Spear was like a Weaver's Beam, for bigness; and the Head of his Spear weighed Six Hundred Shekels of Iron: which in the Book before mentioned, is computed to be Eighteen Pounds and Three Quarters of a Pound. So that his bare Armour was enough to overload an ordinary Horse.

Thus accoutred, and having his Esq; to bear his Shield before him, he advanced within hearing of the Israelitish Host; and then making a stand, thus made his Defiance to the Armies of Israel.

Why (said he) are you come out to set your Battel in array? Am not I a Philistine: And you Servants to Saul? Choose ye a Man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your Servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our Servants. And the more to provoke the Israelites, he insultingly added; I defy the Armies of Israel this Day: give me a Man, that we may fight together. Thus continuing to do, both Morning and Evening, for Forty Days together, he put Saul, and all Israel that heard him, into a very great fear: for in all the Host of Israel there was not a Man found, that would accept the Challenge.

When therefore neither King Saul, nor any of his Warriours, durst encounter this Philistine; God brings forth his Champion, little David: so lately, and privately Anointed for the Kingdom.

David's Three Eldest Brothers served at that time in the Army under Saul; and David, who was the Youngest Son, and looked after the Sheep, used to go to and fro, between his Father's House and the Camp; to visit his Brethren, and supply them with Necessaries. And God so ordered it at this time, that on the last of those Forty Days, whereon the Philistine came forth to defy Israel, David should come to the Camp.

For Jesse, the Night before, having appointed his Son David to carry some Provisions to his Brethren, with a Present to their Colonel; and bring him word how they did: David getting up betimes in the Morning, and leaving his Sheep with an Under-keeper, came to the Trench of the Camp, just as the Host, going forth to the Field shouted for the Signal of Battel; for Israel and the Philistines had put the Battel in array, Army against Army.

David therefore, leaving his Provisions with the Keeper of the Carriages, ran into the Army to salute his Brethren: and as he stood talking with them, Behold, there came up the Philistines Champion, Goliath of Gath, out of the Armies of the Philistines, and gave the same Defiance, in David's hearing, that he had used to give before.

At sight of this grim Warriour, the Men of Israel were so scared, that in great fear they fled from him; and said one to another, Have ye seen this Man that is come up? Surely to defy Israel is he come. But the King hath declared, that whosoever will accept his Challenge, and shall

shall have the good Success to kill him; he will greatly enrich that Man: and will not only give him his Daughter to Wife, but will also make his Father's House free in Israel, from all publick Payments and Taxes. 1 Sam. 17.

This David over-hearing, and being willing to understand it more thoroughly; asked some of them that stood by him, What should be done to the Man that should be so happy as to kill this daring *Philistine*, and thereby take away the Reproach (of his Defiance) from *Israel*. And in his Zeal for the Honour of God, and his Contempt of the great *Lubber*, he added, *For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should be thus suffered to defie the Armies of the living God?* Whereupon some of the People repeated to him what Terms the King had proposed to the Victor.

But *Eliab*, David's Eldest Brother, hearing him speak thus to the People, was angry with David (to whom perhaps, he bore less good Will, since the time that *Samuel* the Prophet, setting him aside, had sent for David from the Sheep-coates, and preferred him before him.) And not containing himself, asked him in an upbraiding manner, Why he came down thither, neglecting his Business at home? And with whom he had left those few Sheep in the Wilderness? *I know*, said he, *the Pride, and the haughtiness of thy Heart: for thou art come down now to see the Battel.*

This was a *Churlish snib* for a Brother, and an ill Return for David's Kindness in coming to see him, and to bring him Provisions. But David put it gently by, only saying, *What have I done? Had I not cause enough to come, when my Father sent me?* And to avoid any appearance of Quarrelling with his Brother, he turned from him, and discoursing with another, after the same manner he had done before, manifested a *Couragious Zeal* for God, and an high *Contempt* of that *vaunting Enemy*.

It was not long e're David's Words were rehearsed before *Saul*; who thereupon sent for him. And when David was come into *Saul's* Presence, he with a settled Courage said, *Let no Man's Heart fail, because of this Philistine: for I thy Servant will go fight with him.* Alas! said *Saul*, Thou art not a fit Match for him: for *thou art but a Youth; and he a Man of War from his Youth.*

David thereupon recounted to *Saul* what he, Youth (as was) had already atchieved. Thy Servant, said he, kept his Father's Sheep; and there came a Lion, and a Bear, and took a Lamb out of the Flock: and I went after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his Mouth; and when he arose against me, I caught him by the Beard, and smiting him slew him, *Thy Servant slew both the Lion and the Bear: And this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the Armies of the Living God. For the Lord that delivered me out of the Paw of the Lion, and out of the Paw of the Bear; he will deliver me out of the Hand of this Philistine.*

The brave Resolution which appeared in David, cheer'd up *Saul* a little; so that he said to David, *Go; and the Lord be with thee.* And to make his little Champion look as much like a Warriour as he could, he armed David with his own Armour; putting an *Helmet* of Brasse upon his Head, and a *Coat of Mail* upon his Body. Upon which when David had girded his Sword, and walked a Turn or Two about, to try how he could wield his Arms, he soon found they would not do, and told *Saul*, he could not go with those: for, said he, *I have not proved them.* They might, perhaps, be *Armour of Proof*, and being the King's, for his own wear, probably were so: but *they were not of Proof to David.* Nor

need any wonder that David could not go in Saul's Armour, if they consider David as a little Stripling, and Saul a lusty Man taller by the Head and Shoulders than any of the People.

David therefore, putting off Saul's Armour again, took his Staff (probably his Sheep-hook) in one Hand, and his Sling in the other; and having his Shepherd's Bag or Scrip by his side, he chose him Five smooth Stones of the Valley, and put them into it.

Thus furnished, he advanced towards the Philistines: who seeing some body come out from the Israelitish Army, began also to move towards him, his Armour-bearer carrying his Shield before.

But when he was come so near, that he could discern it was but a Youth, of a Maidenly Countenance, and unarmed, that came out against him; taking it for a Mark of Contempt upon him, that such an one should offer him the Combat, he in great Disdain, asked him, *Am I a Dog, that thou comest to me with Stones?* Then Cursing him by his Gods, he said to David, Come but within my reach; and I will give thy Flesh to the Fowls of the Air, and to the Beasts of the Field.

David, nothing daunted with that bold Threat, made him this no less bold return.

Thou comest to me, trusting in thine own Strength and Arms, being furnished with a Sword, with a Spear, and with a Shield: but I come to thee in the Name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the Armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This Day will the Lord deliver thee into mine Hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine Head from thee: and I will give (not thy Carcass only, but) the Carcasses of the Host of the Philistines this Day, unto the Fowls of the Air, and to the Wild Beasts of the Earth; that all the Inhabitants of the Earth may know, that there is a God in Israel. And all this Assembly shall know, that the Lord saveth not with the Sword and Spear: for the Battel is the Lord's; and he will give you into their Hands.

With this netling Answer enraged, the Philistine came on, to assail David. Who as much in Courage above him, as in Stature below him, ran forward to meet the Philistine. And having, upon the Philistines first Motion, taken a Stone out of his Bag, and fitted it to his Sling; he let fly at the Philistine with that Force, that (the God of Israel, whom he had defied, both strengthening David's Arm, and guiding the Stone, he smote the Philistine in the Forehead, and the Stone sinking into his Head, down fell Goliath flat upon his Face. Whereupon David, halting to him, leaped up upon him: and having no Sword of his own, drew out the Philistine's Sword; and therewith slew him, and cut off his Head.

When the Philistines saw that their Champion was dead, they fled. And the Men of Israel and Judah, standing ready in Arms, gave a Shout; and pursuing the Philistines through the Valley, to the very Gates of Ekron, gave them a very great Slaughter and Overthrow: and then returning from the Chase, took the Spoil of the Philistines Tents.

David, in his return from the Slaughter of Goliath, was met by Abner, the General of Saul's Host, and by him conducted to Saul, with the Philistine's Head in his Hand; and Saul asking him *whose Son art thou, young Man?* David answered, *I am the Son of thy Servant Jesse, the Beth-lehemite:* for Saul, it seems, when David went forth against the Philistines, had enquired of Abner whose Son he was; and Abner could not tell him.

Hence a doubtful Question arises, concerning the time when this Duel was fought. For since we read, in chap. 16. 19. (before this Account

count of the *Philistine's* Defiance) that *Saul* sent for *David*; and that *David* came to him, plaid on his Harp before him, grew into his Favour, and was made his Armour-bearer, *ver.* 21, 22. it is much that neither *Saul*, nor *Abner*, should remember, nor know him, when he came to offer himself to the Combat. This hath made some think, that this Combat was fought before that time, that *David* was sent to play before *Saul*. To which the Character given of *David*, by *Saul's* Servants, when they recommended him, not only for a *Skilful* Player, but a mighty *Valiant* Man, a Man of War, and that the Lord was with him, *ver.* 18. seems to give some Countenance. But on the other hand, as it may not be supposed that this Encounter with *Goliath*, happened before *David* had been Anointed by *Samuel*: so, since the Spirit of the Lord, upon that Anointing of *David*, came immediately upon him, from that Day forward, *ver.* 13. It is reasonable to conclude, that from that very time the Spirit of the Lord departed from *Saul*; and that from the very same time the Evil Spirit vexed him. And that very soon after, *Saul's* Servants, perceiving him to be troubled, recommended *David* to him; and that upon *David's* playing before him, the Evil Spirit had left *Saul*, and he was grown well, *ver.* 23. before the *Philistines* made this Invasion upon him. And the Character *Saul's* Servants gave of *David's* Valour, might well enough arise from his bold and brave Undertaking, in encountering and killing the *Lion* and the *Bear*, in Defence of his Flock: which tho' *Saul* had not, yet some of his Servants might likely enough have heard of; and from thence infer, the Lord was with him. Besides, we read, that *David* went and returned from *Saul*, to feed his Father's Sheep at *Beth-lehem*, chap. 17. 15. And since we never read of his going to *Saul*, but upon that Occasion, when the Evil Spirit troubled him; and this, when he went to fight the *Philistines*: it is most likely, his going to *Saul* there mentioned, *ver.* 15. was when *Saul* was so troubled; and his returning from *Saul* to his Sheep again, was after the Evil Spirit had left *Saul*. For after *David* had slain the *Philistine*, *Saul*, it is said took him that Day, and would let him go no more home to his Father's House: but set him over the Men of War, chap. 18. 2. and 5. So that if this Duel had been before his playing to *Saul*, there had been no need to have sent for *David* to play before him: for he then had him with him. But leaving this to the Reader's Consideration and Judgment, let us go on with the Story.

David, it seems, after he had presented *Goliath's* Head to King *Saul*, brought it to *Jerusalem*: but whether then, or sometime after, and how long, is also uncertain. The Giant's Armour he laid up in his Tent. Only the Sword, wherewith he cut his Head off, seems to have been dedicated to the Lord, and delivered to the Priest to keep; as a Monument of the Victory, and of *Israel's* Deliverance.

Jonathan, the Eldest Son of *Saul* was present, when *Abner* brought *David* to his Father, with *Goliath's* Head in his Hand. And being himself a Man of great Valour (as his own late bold Attempt upon the *Philistines* Garrison, ch. 14. shew'd) was so taken with *David's* Courage and Conduct in this Engagement, that he contracted a firm Friendship with him: which grew in time so close, that to express the Strictness of it, it is said, *The Soul of Jonathan was knit with the Soul of David*; and that *Jonathan* loved him as his own Soul. And having thus made a mutual Covenant of lasting Kindness between them, the young Prince, stripping himself of the Robe that was upon him, gave it to *David*, with other of his Garments, even to his Sword, his Belt, and his Bow.

Thus

Thus went all things smooth and prosperous with David for a while. But long it held not. For Saul, not suffering David to go back to live with his Father any more, set him over the Men of War. In which Post he behaved himself so wisely, in all the Expeditions Saul sent him upon; that not the Common People only, but the Courtiers also, did very much favour and commend him.

This made Saul uneasy. And that which encreased his Uneasiness was, he called to mind, that when David returned from the Philistine, and he with his Army from the Chase, the Women of Israel came out of the Cities to meet Saul, Singing and Dancing, and playing on Tabrets and other Instruments of Musick, for Joy of the Victory: and in their Songs, as they play'd, they said, *Saul hath slain his Thousands, and David his Ten Thousands.*

This their attributing more to David, than to him, Saul took notice of, and resented very ill; saying, *They have ascribed unto David Ten Thousands, and to me they have ascribed but Thousands: and what can he have (more than the People's Favour) but the Kingdom.* And being naturally a jealous Prince, and of nothing more than his Scepter; and of that too, more, since Samuel had told him the Lord had Rejected him, and given the Kingdom to another: he had a watchful Eye over David from this Day forward, to do him Mischief.

Nor was it long before he attempted it. For the next Day, the Evil Spirit, that had troubled Saul before, entred him again; acting him in a sort of Prophetick Manner, in Imitation of the true Prophets: so that David was fain to stand, and play on his Harp before him, as he had formerly done. And Saul having a Javelin in his Hand, thought this a seasonable Opportunity to strike David thro' with it; and thereupon, without more ado, cast the Javelin at him. But David, being nimble, flipt aside; and escaping the Blow, avoided his Presence.

Now was Saul afraid of David in earnest; having given him this just Provocation, and being sensible that the Lord was with David, and was departed from himself. Wherefore he removed David from attending on his Person: and to expose him to the greater Danger, as well as to degrade him from his higher Office of Generalship, he made him a Colonel, or Captain over a Thousand only. In which Station David behaved himself with so much Prudence, and good Conduct, that it was still more evident the Lord was with him: which made the People, both Israel and Judah, care for him highly. But the more they loved him, the more Saul hated him; and sought his Destruction.

David by the Law of Arms, might have claimed one of Saul's Daughters, that being part of the Reward promised to him that should kill Goliath. But neither was David ambitious of the Honour of Marrying the King's Daughter; nor Saul regardful to perform his Word: till it came into his Mind, that the bestowing his Daughter on David, might be a likely means to bring him to his End.

Wherefore having already, with his own Hand, attempted his Life, but failed: and thinking it would look better, if he fell by the Hand of the Philistines, than by his, he offered him his Elder Daughter, Merab. Telling him, he would give him her to Wife, without any other Condition, than that he should exercise his Valour, in fighting the Lord's Battels.

That he had done before, in encountering and killing Goliath; whereby he fairly won the Princely Dame: and ought not to have had any future Conditions put upon him, of fighting for her again. But David, not objecting that (as rather coveting than shunning, Opportunities of shewing his Valour) modestly excused himself; representing to Saul the

the *Lowness* of his *Family*, and *Meanness* of his Condition, rendring him unfit for so great Advancement. But he might have spared his Excuse: for *fickle Saul* soon changed his mind; and instead of giving his Daughter *Merab* to *David*, gave her to *Adriel*, the *Meholathite*, the Son of *Barzillai*. And *David* might be glad he missed her, if her Nature answered her Name, which signifies both *Chiding* and *Fighting*. 1 Sam. 18.

But *Saul* had another Daughter, named *Michal*, who, it seems, was in love with *David*. Which when *Saul* was made acquainted with, he was glad of it; and said, Well, I'll give him her, that she may be a Snare to him: and that the Hand of the *Philistines* may be against him. Wherefore *Saul* told him, tho' *Merab* was disposed of, he should have *Michal*: for he should be his Son-in-law, in one of the Twain.

And because he had found *David* backward, he instructed his Servants to discourse with him, as of themselves; and to inculcate to him, what great *Delight* the King took in him, and how much all the Courtiers loved him: and from thence take occasion to persuade him, to lay hold of so fair an Offer, of being the King's Son-in-law.

What *Delight* the King took in him, *David* might pretty well understand, by his casting his *Javelin* at him. But that perhaps might be somewhat excused, as the Effect of a *Phrenetic Fit*, when the Evil Spirit was upon him.

Saul's Servants, willing to please their Master (whose Secret Design it is probable they might not know;) and withal desirous of *David's* Promotion: spared not to set forth the Honour and Advantages of this Match; and to use their Rhetoric, to persuade *David* to it.

But *David* wished them to consider, that it was not a light Matter, for one of his Rank and Condition to be the King's Son-in-law. For, it being the Custom of those times, for Men (not as now, to receive Portions with their Wives, but) to give Dowries for their Wives; whence could they suppose he should be able to raise a Dowry befitting a King's Daughter?

When they had reported this to *Saul*, he bid them tell *David*, that he did not regard a Dowry: only for the Exercise of his Valour, and that the King might be revenged of his Enemies, he should bring him an Hundred Foreskins of the *Philistines*. This *Saul* proposed, to excite *David's* Courage, and engage him in some dangerous Exploits, in hopes he might fall by the Hands of the *Philistines*.

These unexpected Terms did so well suit with *David's* Martial Temper, that seeing he might have a fair young Princess to his Wife, for only doing that, which without any such Condition, he would, for its own sake, gladly have undertaken; he joyfully embraced the Offer. And that he might not be served in this, as he had been in the Offer of the other Daughter; he resolved there should be no Delay on his part. Wherefore making an Incurſion upon the *Philistines*, within the time prescribed by *Saul*, he slew Two Hundred Men of them, and delivering their Foreskins to the King by Tale, gave him a Double Dowry for his Daughter, that he might be his Son-in-law: which of Right he should have been without this, for his killing *Goliath*.

Tho' this was not a welcome Present to *Saul*, who had rather *David's* Head had been brought him: yet having engaged himself so far in the Promise of his Daughter; and probably hoping that by her he might afterwards find Means to work his Ruin, he gave him his Daughter *Michal* to Wife.

By this Alliance raised to an higher Pitch of Honour, *David* sought all occasions to signalize his Vertue and Valour. So that upon the next Engagement

^{1 Sam. 18.} gagement with the *Philistines*, he behaved himself so *bravely*; and shewed such admirable *Courage* and *Conduct*, that he eminently excelled all the Servants of *Saul*: and did thereby not a little endear himself to the People.

But still the more the People *favoured* him: the more did *Saul* both *fear* and *bate* him. And being now well assured that the Lord was with him, and finding also that *Michal*, his Wife, did entirely love him (which put him out of hopes of working her into his Designs against him) he conceived such mortal Enmity towards him, that not able longer to contain it within his own Breast, he openly gave Charge both to *Jonathan* his Son, and to all his Servants, that they should kill *David*.

^{1 Sam. 19.} But so far was *Jonathan* from entertaining a Thought of killing *David*, his *Bosom-friend*, and now his *Brother*, whom he took so great Delight in; that fearing lest any of his Father's Guards, *frighted* with Threats, or *tempted* with hope of Rewards, might *surprize* *David*, and kill, or hurt him: he got to him as soon as he could, and gave him notice of the Danger he was in, advised and desired him to take care of himself, and keep out of the way, in some private Place, where he might be safe until the Morning; assuring him that he, in the mean time, would take an occasion to discourse with the King his Father concerning him, and would give him an Account how he found things.

Accordingly *Jonathan* falling into Communication with his Father, took an occasion to commend *David* to him, and thus to mediate on his Behalf.

Let not the King (said he) *sin* against his Servant *David*, since he hath not sinned against thee; but hath served thee very Faithfully. For he adventured his Life (upon great Disadvantages) and slew the *Philistine*: and the Lord by him wrought a great Salvation for all *Israel*. Thou thyself wast an Eye-witness of it, and didst rejoyce in it. Wherefore then wilt thou *sin* against innocent Blood, in slaying *David* without a cause?

Whether through the Mediation of *Jonathan*, *Saul* was really softened towards *David* for the present. Or whether, lest he should wholly lose him, or by too high Provocation drive him to some desperate Attempt; he thought fit to *dissemble* his Displeasure, that he might get him once more within his reach, and have one *stroke* more at him: he put on a milder Countenance, and suffering himself to be prevailed on by his Son, gave him Assurance that *David* should not be slain; confirming it to him by a Solemn Oath.

Whereupon *Jonathan* called for *David*, and having acquainted him how he had transacted the Matter with his Father; and what Assurance *Saul* had given of his Safety: he brought *David* to *Saul*; and he was in his Presence, as in times past.

But every occasion that raised *David's* Fame, renewed *Saul's* Jealousy, and raised his Displeasure to an higher Pitch; the Effects of which *David* soon found. For *Saul* being cast into another *frantick* Fit, by the Evil Spirit that possessed him, as he sat in his House with his *Javelin* in his Hand; *David* was called to allay his Passion, by playing with his Hand upon his Harp. Which Opportunity *Saul* laying hold of, cast his *Javelin* again at *David*; thinking therewith to have smitten him to the Wall. But *David*, forewarned by former Dangers, having a watchful Eye upon the Motion of *Saul's* Hand, nimbly slipped aside; and so again escaped the *Javelin*: which was thrown with so great Force, that it pierced into the Wall against which *David* had stood.

Here-

Hereupon immediately leaving the Court, *David* retired to his own House; hoping he might have been safe there: but *Saul* sent some of his *Guards* after him; with Charge to watch the House all Night, and slay him in the Morning. Of which, when *Michal*, *David's* Wife, had notice, she acquainted her Husband with it; telling him, if he did not provide for his Safety that Night, he would certainly be slain in the Morning. She therefore prevailing with him, to make use of a *Contrivance* of hers, let him down through a Window; and *David* by the Advantage of a Dark Night, escaped. 1 Sam. 19.

In the Morning came they whom *Saul* had sent to kill *David*; and asking for him, were answered by *Michal*, that he was sick a-bed: She thinking by that Shift to have put them off, at least from too quick a Pursuit after him. But when the *Guards* returned with that Answer to the King, he immediately dispatcht them back again, with a strict Charge to bring *David* in his Bed to him, that he might slay him: glad, no doubt, that he was so sure of him.

But a great, and very uneasy Disappointment it was to him, when the Messengers came again and told him, that having searched *David's* Bed; they found nothing in it, but an *Image*, with a Pillow of Goats-hair for a Bolster: which *Michal* had laid in the Bed, instead of her Husband; who was fled and gone. And so highly was *Saul* displeased with his Daughter *Michal*, for putting this Trick upon him; and letting her Husband escape; whom he called his Enemy: that she, to appease him, was fain to make him believe, that her Husband had threatned to kill her, if she would not let him go.

David mean while, treading unused Paths, made his escape to *Ramah*; that he might pour out his Complaints to his sure Friend, the good old Prophet *Samuel*: which having done, he and *Samuel* went and dwelt in *Najoth*, where was a School of the Prophets: in which perhaps they might hope to be secure from any Violence from *Saul*; out of Respect at least to the Place, which in those times obtained the Privilege of a Sanctuary.

But they did not yet thoroughly understand *Saul*. For no sooner was it told him that *David* was there, but he sent Messengers thither to take him. Who when they came there, and saw the Company of the Prophets Propheying, and *Samuel* standing over them (as one appointed to instruct them) the Spirit of God came upon the Messengers of *Saul*, and they also Prophefied (or behaved themselves in the same manner as they saw the Prophets do.)

Saul, hearing how it fared with the first Messengers, sent others on the same Errand, a Second time, and a Third. Which speeding all as the first did, he then went himself. And in the way thither, the Spirit of God came upon him also, and he went on Propheying, (which being a Word of large Signification, Interpreters take in this Place for singing of Psalms, and Hymns of Thanksgivings and Praise to God) till he came to the Place where *Samuel* and *David* were. And being come thither, he stript off his Clothes also and Prophefied before *Samuel*; lying down Naked that Day and the next Night.

This happening in the School and Company of the Prophets, into which, and amongst whom none but good and vertuous Men did use to enter, or were admitted; it gave occasion for that Proverbial Speech (used when an ill Man thrusts himself into the Company of good Men, and endeavours to personate them) *Is Saul also among the Prophets?*

Saul's being thus unexpectedly detained among the Prophets, gave *David* fair Opportunity to consult his own Safety. Wherefore leaving *Saul* at *Najoth*, he speedily repaired to his true Friend Prince *Jonathan*. 1 Sam. 20.

than (who is supposed to have been left as *Vice-roy* to his Father, while he went to *Najoth*.) And being come to *Jonathan*, he in an expostulatory manner opened to him the Streight and Danger he was in; Saying, *What have I done? What is mine Iniquity? And what is my Sin before thy Father, that he seeketh my Life?*

Jonathan, not apprehending his Danger so great as it was, and willing to ease him of his Fears, answered him, *God forbid: Thou shalt not die.* And to confirm him, added, *My Father will do nothing great or small, without acquainting me with it: and why should he hide this thing from me?* Thou mayst be confident there is no such thing intended.

David knew *Saul* better than his own Son did; and finding his former Words had not prevailed upon *Jonathan*, to impress him with a due Sense of his Danger: he now, to gain his Belief, with a Solemn Oath assured him, that there was *but a Step between him and Death*; but that his Father, certainly knowing he favoured him, would not let him know of it, that he might not be grieved at it.

This so earnest Confidence in *David*, made great Impression on *Jonathan*: so that he readily offered him his Service, telling him, whatsoever his Soul desired, he would do for him.

David thereupon taking boldness, said, *To morrow, thou knowest is the New Moon; and I should not fail to sit with the King at Meat, But, since the Power is now in thine Hand (as Deputy to thy Father, in his Absence) Give me leave to hide my self in the Field until the Third Day Night; and if thy Father enquire after me, tell him I asked leave of thee, to go to Beth-lehem my City, to the Anniversary Feast that is kept there for all my Family. If thy Father, when he hear it, shall say it is well: that shall be a Token of Peace to thy Servant. But if he be very wroth, take it for a sure Sign, that Evil to me is determined by him. And then (added he) seeing thou hast brought thy Servant into a Covenant of the Lord with thee; deal thou at least thus kindly with thy Servant, that if there be Iniquity in me, do thou thy self slay me: for why shouldst thou deliver me up to thy Father; to be not only put to Death, but ignominiously handled?*

Oh, far from thee be that, said *Jonathan*: for if I certainly knew that Evil were determined by my Father to come upon thee, dost thou think I would not tell thee?

But who, replied *David*, shall tell me, how thy Father takes my Absence? Or how shall I know if he answer thee roughly?

Jonathan thereupon inviting *David* to walk out with him into the Field, when they were come to a Place of Privacy, he renewed his Covenant with *David* before the Lord God of *Israel*; whom he invoked to be a Witness of it, and Revenger of the Breach thereof upon himself, if, when he should have sounded his Father's Mind concerning *David*, if he found him well disposed to him, he did not give him an account thereof, and if he found he had designed Evil to him, he did not let him know it, and secure his Escape, that under the Favour of the Lord, he might go in Peace. These were the Terms on *Jonathan's* part.

But that which he required of *David* was, That he should not only shew him the Kindness of the Lord, during his own Life: but that he should not cut off his Kindness from *Jonathan's* House for ever, no, not when the Lord should have cut off the Enemies of *David*. For as *Jonathan* could not be ignorant, what the Prophet *Samuel* had denounced to *Saul*, concerning his Rejection, and the Renting of the Kingdom from him: (*ch. 15. 28.*) so no doubt he had a full perswasion, that the Lord would one Day set *David* upon the Throne of *Israel*.

Having

Having thus confirm'd their Covenant by mutual Oath (for *Jonathan* caused *David* to swear to him also) they began to concert the manner ^{1 Sam. 20.} how this matter concerning *David's* Safety should be managed. The Result whereof was, That *David* when he had absented himself Three Days, should go down to the Place where he had hid himself before (*ch. 19. 2.*) and should remain there under the hollow side of a great Stone, called *Ezel*, which was a *Way-mark*. And I (*said Jonathan*) will shoot Three Arrows on the side of the Stone, as tho' I shot at a Mark. And when I send my Page to find the Arrows, and bring them me again; If I say expressly to him, Behold, the Arrows are on this side, of thee, take them; then come thou: for there is Peace to thee, and no hurt, as the Lord liveth. But if I say unto the young Man, Behold, the Arrows are beyond thee; Go thy way: for the Lord hath sent thee away. And as touching the matter, which thou and I have spoken of, Behold, the Lord be between me and thee for ever. Thus they parted: and *David* according to this Agreement, withdrew and hid himself.

And now the *New Moon* being come, and King *Saul* returned from *Najoth* to that solemn Feast; and *Jonathan* having resigned his Place to his Father: King *Saul* sat down to eat, as he used to do, in his Seat by the Wall; having *Abner* by his side, and *David's* Seat was empty. Yet *Saul* said nothing of him that Day: for he thought with himself, he is not clean; something has befallen him, that has made him ceremonially unclean so that he may not partake of this Feast, according to the Law, *Levit. 7. 19, 20.*

But when he found his Seat empty again next Day, he asked *Jonathan* (who, he knew, was his Confident) *Wherefore cometh not the Son of Jesse to Meat, neither yesterday, nor to Day?* So, being offended, he called him in Contempt; not vouchsafing to call him by his Name. nor by the Title of his Office, much less, his Son-in-law.

Jonathan, to pacifie his Father, answered him (according to the Agreement made between *David* and him) that *David* having received an Invitation from his Brother, to their Family-Feast at *Bethlehem*, had earnestly intreated him to give him leave to go thither: which was the Reason why he came not to the King's Table at that time.

Saul, it is probable, had designed *David's* Death at that time; and now finding himself disappointed by his Son *Jonathan*, he was very angry with him. And suffering his Rage to break forth into Reviling Language, called *Jonathan* a perverse Rebel, or Son of perverse Rebellion, or (as some think, the more to gall him with an indecent Reflection upon his Mother.) *Son of the Perverse Rebellious Woman*: adding withal, *Do not I know, that thou hast chosen the Son of Jesse to thy own Confusion; And to the Confusion of thy Mother's Nakedness? For as long as the Son of Jesse liveth on the Ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy Kingdom. Wherefore send now, and fetch him unto me: for he shall surely die.*

This so rough and unusual Language convinced *Jonathan*, that *David* understood his Father, better than he had hitherto done. Yet he could not forbear so far to advocate the Cause of his Friend and Brother, as in a gentle way of Expostulation with his Father, to ask him, *Why David should be slain? or what he had done, that could deserve Death?* But *Saul* enraged before, but now Transported with unbridled Fury, tho' he loved his Son *Jonathan* very well, cast his Javelin at him to have slain him: whereby *Jonathan* was throughly satisfied that his Father had determined to slay *David*.

1 Sam. 20. Tho' Jonathan being a nimble active Man, escaped without a Wound in his Body; yet not without a deep Wound to his Mind: for being a Man of great Courage, and high Stomach, he could not brook this so great Indignity. He was his Father's Eldest Son, Heir apparent to the Crown, long since grown to an adult Age, had signalized himself a Man at Arms, having atchieved great Enterprizes in War, and but the other Day had sat upon his Father's Throne, as his Vicegerent in his absence: and now to be so shamefully treated, and that too in so publick an appearance; was more than he could bear, without shewing some Resentment, tho' from a Father and a King, or rather perhaps, because from a Father and a King. Wherefore filled with Grief for David's Danger, and with Displeasure for the open shame done unto himself, he arose from Table; and withdrew himself, in high Discontent.

But not suffering his own Concern to make him forgetful of his Friend's, he went out next Morning into the Field, at the time appointed between him and David, taking only his Page, a little Lad, with him. And bidding the Lad run, and find out the Arrows which he should shoot, he shot an Arrow beyond him: and when the Lad was come to the Place where the Arrow was; Jonathan calling aloud after him, said, Is not the Arrow beyond thee? Make speed and bring it; stay not. Accordingly the Lad, having gathered up the Arrows, brought them to his Master; who giving him the rest of the Artillery, bid him carry them back into the City: which the Lad did, not knowing any thing of the Business.

By the shooting of the Arrow beyond him, David knew his Doom. And as soon as the Lad was gone, coming out of the Place where he lay hid, on the South-side of the Stone, he fell on his Face to the Ground, bowing himself Three times. Then Jonathan and he embracing and kissing each other, wept one over the other, until David exceeded.

But time not permitting Delay, Jonathan said to David, Go, in Peace: and let what we have both of us sworn in the Name of the Lord God, saying, The Lord be between me and thee, and between my Seed and thy Seed for ever, be kept inviolable by us. Whereupon David arose and departed, and Jonathan returned into the City.

1 Sam. 21. David, now finding his Case desperate, directed his Course to Nob, a City of the Priests; that Abimelech the Priest might enquire of the Lord for him. But as soon as Abimelech, who knew him to be the King's Son-in-law, a Man in Chief Place, and ordinarily well attended (but knew not that he was out of Favour with the King) saw him coming without any Attendance at all: he was afraid something was amiss; and asked how it came to pass, that he was come alone?

David considering his own Circumstances, and how vindictive Saul was, and not willing the Priest should come into Trouble for entertaining him, thought it not advisable to open his Condition to him: but leave him room to defend himself by his Ignorance thereof, if he should happen to be called to Account.

Wherefore he pretended to Abimelech, that the King had sent him upon a Secret Expedition, with strict Charge not to let any Body know of it. For which Reason it was that he was come in that private manner, having appointed his Servants to attend him at such a Place. But that having, thro' haste, made no Provision for the Journey, he was Destitute of Necessaries for himself and his Men; and therefore desired, if he had any Bread to spare him some.

The Priest answered, that he had not any common Bread. But he had some hallowed Bread (such as was then called Shew-bread, from its being shewed, or set in Two Rows, Six Loaves in a Row, upon the Table

Table, before the Lord; which being *shifted*, or changed every Sabbath-day, the Priest, when he set on new, took the old Bread for his own *eating*, according to the Law, *Levit.* 24. 5. to 10.) But because this sort of Bread was for the Priests eating only, (who were *hallowed* also, as well as the Bread, and were *supposed* to be clean;) the Priest asked *David*, if his Servants had kept themselves from *Pollutions*, at least from Women: which *David* assuring him they had, and withal, urging, that the Bread was in a manner Common, seeing there was other hallowed that Day in its room; the Priest gave him of the hallowed Bread.

But Bread was not all that *David* wanted. Being let down through the Widow in haste and fear, he took with him neither *Sword* nor *Spear*. The want of which he imputed also to the urgent haste of the King's Business; which would not permit him to stay to take his Arms with him. And therefore if the Priest had any *Spear* or *Sword* by him, he desired that he would let him have it. The Priest told him, there was the *Sword of Goliath the Philistine*, whom he slew in the Valley of *Elah* (which lay wrapt up in a Cloth behind the *Ephod*;) if he would have that, he might take it; but there was no other. Ay, that to choose, said *David*, *for there is none like it*.

Now who should happen to be present at this *Interview* between *David* and *Abimelech*, to be an Eye and Ear-witness of what passed between them, but *Doeg the Edomite*, *Saul's* chief *Herdsmen*; who, being detained before the Lord (whether by *Vow*, or by reason of the *Sabbath*, or what other Occasion is uncertain) was there that Day. And probably it was because of him, that *David* feigned that Story to the Priest, of his being sent by the King; that if (which was but too likely, and which *David* suspected) *Doeg* should turn *Informer*, the Priest might have the King's Name and Authority to plead, in his own *Justification* for his having thus friendly entertained *David*.

As for *David*, having got some *Sustenance* to refresh him, and *Goliath's* *Sword* to defend himself with; and not knowing where he could be safe, in any part of *Saul's* Dominions: he fled that Day for fear of *Saul*, and went to *Achish*, the *Philistine* King of *Gath*.

But whether the *Sword* betray'd him, or any of the *Philistines* knew him, King *Achish* his Servants soon discovered who he was; and said unto *Achish*, *Is not this David the King of the Land? Is not this he, of whom they sang one to another in Dances, Saul hath slain his Thousands, and David his Ten Thousands.*

This put *David* in great fear, and made him wish himself safe out of *Achish* his Hands again: and that he might facilitate his escape, he changed his Behaviour before them; and feigning himself mad, he scrabbled on the Doors of the Gate, and let his Spittle drivel down upon his Beard. Which the King taking notice of, said to his Servants, *Lo, ye see the Man is mad: wherefore then have ye brought him to me? Have I need of Madmen, that ye have brought this Fellow to play the Madman in my Presence? Shall this Fellow come into my House?*

This gave *David* an opportunity to get from *Gath*, and make his Escape to the Cave *Adullam*. Where probably, after he had made his Escape, rather than amongst his Enemies in *Gath*, he composed those two Psalms, the 34th and the 56th.

The Town of *Adullam* (in the Cave belonging to which, *David* was hid) being in the Tribe of *Judah* (*Josh.* 15. 35.) and not far from *Beth-lehem*, gave ready means to *David's* Relations, and all his Father's Family, to go down thither to him, as soon as they heard he was there.

Thither

1 Sam. 22.

Thither also gathered unto him every one that was in *Distress*, and every one that was in Debt, and all the *Male-contents*, to the Number of about *Four Hundred Men*, who made him their Captain.

But *David* considering well, that it could not be long before *Saul* would hear of his *little Army*, and be upon him with a *greater*; and having a pious Care for his Father and Mother, cast with himself, where, in these troublesome Times he might find a place of *Safety* for them: and *Moab* being then an Enemy to *Saul*, made him the rather hope for *Succour* there. Wherefore going to *Mizpeh* of *Moab*, he intreated the King of *Moab* to let his aged Parents come thither, and remain there, until he should see how God would be pleased to dispose of his Affairs. And having obtained leave, he brought them before the King of *Moab*; and they dwelt with him, all the while that *David* was in the *Hold*. But that probably was not long: for the Prophet *Gad* (of whom this is the first mention) came to *David*, and warned him not to abide in the *Hold* (which probably was some Place of Security, that the *Moabitish* King had assigned him) but depart, and get him again into the Land of *Judah*. Whereupon *David*, leaving *Moab*, went into the Forreſt of *Hareth*.

Saul mean while abode in *Gibeah*, under a Grove of Trees in *Ramah*; having (as his manner was) his Spear in his Hand, and all his Servants ſtanding about him. And having newly heard that *David* was diſcovered, and that he had raiſed Forces; he thus upbraidingly ſpake unto his Servants that attended him.

Hear now, ye *Benjamites*, (ye who are of my own Tribe and Family) Will the Son of *Jesse* give every one of you Fields and Vineyards, and make you Captains of Thousands and of Hundreds, that all of you have conspired against me: and there is none of you that sheweth me, that my Son hath made a League with the Son of *Jesse*; and there is none of you that is sorry for me, or sheweth unto me, that my Son hath stirred up my Servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this Day. For *Saul*, it seems, having heard that *David* had levied an Army; and remembering that his Son *Jonathan* had left him in Displeasure, upon the Despite he did unto him, when he threw his javelin at him (*chap. 20. 33.*) suspected they had conspired against him, to dethrone him at the least.

When *Saul* had done speaking, and all the rest of *Saul's* Servants were innocently ſilent; out ſteps *Doeg* the *Edomite*, and ſays, I ſaw the Son of *Jesse* coming to *Nob*, to *Abimelech*, the Son of *Ahitub*: and he enquired of the Lord for him, and gave him Victuals, and the Sword of *Goliath* the *Philistine* too.

Upon this Information, *Saul* ſent for *Abimelech* the Priest, and all his Father's Houſe, the Priests that were in *Nob*, to come and appear before him: who, obeying the Summons, readily came, and preſented themſelves to the King. And when *Saul* ſaw *Abimelech*; Hear now (ſaid he to him) thou Son of *Ahitub*: why have ye conspired against me, thou and the Son of *Jesse*, in that thou haſt given him Bread and a Sword, and haſt enquired of God for him, that he ſhould riſe againſt me, to lie in wait, as at this Day?

Abimelech, either not knowing, or not willing to take notice, that *David* was out of Favour with the King, answered him thus; And who is ſo faithful among all thy Servants, as *David*, which is not only the King's Son-in-law: but goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thy Houſe? As much as to ſay, How could I do leſs than entertain, and accommodate a Perſon ſo honourable, and ſo high in favour with my Prince; eſpecially when he came in thy Name, and was going (as he told me) upon ſome eſpecial Service of thine? And as to my enquiring of the Lord

Lord for him (which is the proper Office of my Priesthood) *did I then begin?* Have I not often enquired of the Lord for him before? Why ^{1 Sam. 22.} then am I questioned for it more now, than formerly? As for conspiring against thee: *far be it from me. Let not the King impute any such thing unto thy Servant; nor unto any of the House of my Father: for thy Servant knew nothing of all this, less or more.*

So fair a Plea, before a fair Judge, had been an efficient Defence for him that made it. But this angry Monarch, whose Will was his Law, and whose Law was absolute, hastily replied, *Thou shalt surely die, Abimelech, Thou, and all thy Father's House.* And it being now come to that pass, that it was no more with him but a Word and a Blow, he said to his Foot-guards that stood about him, *Turn, and slay the Priests of the Lord; because their Hand also is with David: and because they knew when he fled, and did not shew it to me.*

A Sentence so unjust and barbarous, astonished the Guards, so that not a Man of them would put forth an Hand, to fall upon the Priests of the Lord.

Then said the King to Doeg, *Turn thou, and fall upon the Priests.* He, ^{A. M. 2722.} an Edomite and brutish Herdsman, never stuck at it: but straightway falling upon the Priests, slew of them *Fourscore and Five* Persons, that did wear a Linnen Ephod.

Such a Stream of innocent Blood had been enough, one would have thought, to have glutted the Revenge of the most Blood-thirsty Tyrant. But Saul, not satisfied with this, caused Nob the City of the Priests, to be smitten with the edge of the Sword, and all the Inhabitants, both Men and Women, Children and Sucklings, together with the very Cattel (Oxen, Asses and Sheep) to be cut off, and utterly extinguishd.

This Execution upon the Priests, tho' extreamly unjust, cruel and inhumane in Saul; was yet just from God: being the compleating of that Judgment, denounced long before by God against Eli, and his House.

Of all that belonged to Abimelech, but one escaped this Slaughter; a young Son of his, named Abiathar; who by the Providence of God, slipping away, fled to David: who was now at Keilah, defending that Town against the Philistines.

There he gave David the lamentable account of the Massacre of the Lord's Priests. Which tho' David did greatly lament, as looking upon himself to have been the innocent occasion of it, by his going to Nob: yet he was the less surprized at it, because he had observed that Doeg was there at that time; and had then a Sense, that Doeg would inform Saul, of all that passed between Abimelech and him. Which in likelihood was the Reason he pretended to be sent by the King; that Abimelech, if examined, might alledge it in his Defence.

As for Abiathar, to cheer him up as well as he could, he wished him to consider, that they were both in the same Case and Danger; and therefore invited him to abide with him, bidding him not to be afraid: for he would protect him in Safety.

This Treachery of Doeg, and Cruelty of Saul upon the Priests, gave occasion to David to compose the 52d Psalm.

While Saul had been thus imbruing his Hands in innocent Blood, David ^{1 Sam. 23.} had employed his Arms in the just Defence of his Country. For, being advertised, that the Philistines had made an Incursion upon Keilah (a City of Judah) to forage the Country thereabouts; and that they were robbing the Threshing-floors: he considered of what Importance it might be, both to his Reputation and Interest, to protect the People, and secure the Provisions; which might be a Supply to his own Men afterwards.

Yet having a *regardful Eye* to God, he would not attempt so hazardous an Undertaking, without *consulting* the Lord. Wherefore having the Prophet *Gad* with him (*chap. 22. 5*). he enquired of the Lord, whether he should go, and smite those *Philistines*, or no. And the Lord bid him, Go smite the *Philistines*, and save *Keilah*. But when he had imparted this to his Men, they began to *shrug* and draw back; alledging, That they lived in *Fear* while they were there, in the midst of *Judah* (among their own Neighbours and Friends:) and how much more then would *Fear* prevail over them, if they should go to *Keilah*, a remote Town upon the Border of the Tribe; there to engage against the Army of the *Philistines*; and perhaps have *Saul*, with all his Forces, at their Back.

David therefore, to encourage his Men, enquired of the Lord again; and the Lord bid him arise, go down to *Keilah*: for I (said he) will deliver the *Philistines* into thine Hand.

By this Second Answer confirmed, *David* and his Men went to *Keilah*, and fighting with the *Philistines*, smote them with a great Slaughter: whereby he both saved the Inhabitants from *Rapin* and *Death*; and brought to *Keilah* a Booty of Cattel, which he took from the *Philistines*.

Such an *Exploit* as this could not long be kept from *Saul*. Who when he heard it, pleased himself (not so much that his Enemies the *Philistines* were beaten, and a good Town of his defended and saved, as) with a *Conceit*, that now God had delivered *David* into his Hand. For by entring a Town that had *Gates* and *Bars*, he conceived *David* was now shut in; and that the *Keilites* would keep him fast. Wherefore calling all his People together, he resolved to go down to *Keilah*, to besiege *David* and his Men there.

David had so good *Intelligence*, that he knew *Saul's* Design against him. And being *doubtful* whether the *Keilites*, notwithstanding the Benefit they had so newly received by him, would be true to him, or no; and consequently whether it were safe for him to stay there, or no: he resolved to cast himself upon the Lord for Direction. Wherefore calling the young Priest *Abiathar* (who being newly come, had brought an *Ephod* with him) he bid him bring the *Ephod* to him, that he might thereby enquire of the Lord.

Which being brought, *David* said, O Lord God of *Israel*, Thy Servant hath certainly heard, that *Saul* seeketh to come to *Keilah*, to destroy the City for my sake: will *Saul* come down, as thy Servant hath heard? O Lord God of *Israel*, I beseech thee tell thy Servant. And the Lord said, He will come down.

Then said *David*, Will the Men of *Keilah* deliver me and my Men into the Hand of *Saul*? And the Lord said, They will deliver thee up. Upon this, *David* drew out his Men, which were now increased to about Six Hundred; and marching out of *Keilah*, they went to seek their Safety where they could. The Report whereof being brought to Court stopt *Saul* from pursuing him at that time.

But *Jonathan* having notice that *David* was in a Wood, in the Wilderness of *Ziph*, went privately to him there; and encouraged him, bidding him not fear: for the Lord would not suffer him to fall into the Hand of *Saul*. But thou (said he) shalt be King over *Israel*, and I shall be next unto thee (so he pleased and deceived himself;) and, that my Father knows, which makes him so uneasy. Then having renewed and confirmed their Covenant before the Lord, *Jonathan* returned home, leaving *David* in the Wood, where he is thought to have composed the 63d Psalm.

He had not been long in the Wilderness of *Ziph*, ere the officious *Ziphites*, to curry Favour with their King, went and informed *Saul*, ^{1 Sam. 23.} that *David* was retired into the *strong Holds* in their Woods; inviting him to come down with his Army, and they would deliver up *David* into his Hands.

The crafty King thanking them for their *Kindness*, and commending their *Loyalty*, desired them to return, and inform themselves more thoroughly of *David's haunts*, and take good notice of his *lurking Places*, and come to him again with a more exact and certain account: and then (said he) I'll go with you; and if he be in the Land, I'll search him out, through all the Thousands of *Judah*.

The *Ziphites* thereupon return. And *David*, having got notice of their Treachery, shifting his Quarters, went into the Wilderness of *Maon*: whither *Saul*, upon advice of his Removal, followed him.

And now was *David* in a very great *Streight*: for so near was *Saul* got to him; that *David* with his Men were on the one side of the Mountain, and *Saul* was on the other side of the same Mountain with his Host. And as *David* made what haste he could to draw off his Men, for fear of *Saul*: so *Saul*, having by much the greater Numbers endeavoured to encompass *David* and his Men round about, that he might take them; And there seemed, in the Eye of Humane Reason, no way for *David* to escape.

But in the greatest danger, the Lord sent Help. For on a sudden came a Messenger, in post haste, to acquaint *Saul* that the *Philistines* had invaded the Land on the other side; and to desire him to bring back his Forces, to repress them with all speed.

Thus God sometimes delivers his People, by raising up Enemies against their Enemies. And thus, for this time, *David* escaped. For *Saul* drawing off his Army to go against the *Philistines*, *David* went up from thence, and sat down in the strong-holds of *En-gedi*: and there it is probable, at least on this occasion, he composed the 54th Psalm.

As soon as *Saul* had repelled the *Philistines*, hearing that *David* was removed to *En-gedi*, he took Three Thousand choice Men, out of all ^{1 Sam. 24.} *Israel*; and went forth to seek *David* and his Men upon the Rocks of the Wild Goats (the highest and most craggy Places of the Country.) And on his way, seeing a Cave, he went into it to ease Nature; little thinking that *David* was so near him: who, with some of his Men, was lodged in the sides of that Cave.

Well may we suppose, that the Sight of *Saul*, not knowing at the first upon what Occasion he came in, put *David* into great Fear. Which made him betake himself to God for help, in that Prayer, which being afterwards committed to Writing, hath the Place of the 142d Psalm. A. M.
2923.

David's Men when they saw *Saul* come in alone, thought this a fit Opportunity to put an end to their Troubles. And therefore they put him in mind, that this was the Day, of which the Lord had said unto him (but when, or where, doth not appear) Behold, I will deliver thine Enemy into thine Hand, that thou mayst do to him as it shall seem good unto thee (Or, as if this Providence, in bringing *Saul* thus within his reach did so speak.) Intimating thereby, that now *Saul* lying at his Mercy, he might easily cut him off, and rid himself of so Potent and Implacable an Enemy. Not considering, that *Saul* had Three Thousand Armed Men at his Heels, ready to have revenged that Act upon them, and to have cut them all off for it.

But

But David, who besides that Danger, moved upon another Principle, answered, *The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my Master, to stretch forth mine Hand against him; seeing he is the Lord's Anointed.*

With these Words David restrained his Servants; not suffering them to rise against Saul. But he himself, going softly to the Place where Saul had left his Robe (when, to accommodate himself to the Occasion, it is probable he had put it off, and laid it by) privily cut off the Skirt of the Robe: which yet he had no sooner done, but *his Heart smote him* for doing it; as judging it a too bold and dis-respectful Carriage towards his Sovereign.

When Saul had done his Occasion, he rose up out of the Cave, and went on his way. And David, following him out of the Cave, got into a Place of Advantage for Safety; and then calling unto Saul, said, *My Lord the King!* Upon which unexpected Voice Saul, looking back, David stooped with his Face to the Earth, and bowing, thus addressed himself to him.

Wherefore bearest thou Men's Words, that say David seeketh thy hurt? Behold, this day thine Eyes have seen, how that the Lord had delivered thee to day into mine Hand in the Cave; where some advised me to kill thee: but mine Eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine Hand against my Lord, for he is the Lord's Anointed. Moreover, my Father, (for so I will presume to call thee, tho' thou wilt not vouchsafe to call me Son) See, and take good notice of the Skirt of thy Robe in mine Hand: for in that I cut off the Skirt of thy Robe, and yet did not kill thee, thou mayst thereby see and know, that there is neither Evil nor Transgression in my Hand, and that I have not sinned against thee; and yet thou huntest my Life to take it. The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee; but mine Hand shall not be upon thee. As saith the Proverb of the Ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the Wicked: but mine Hand shall not be upon thee. After whom (continued he) is the King of Israel come forth? After whom dost thou pursue? After a dead Dog? After a Flea? (for so, to shame Saul, he debased himself, in comparison of so great a King, and so great an Host.) Then added, The Lord therefore be judge between thee and me, and plead my Cause, and deliver me out of thine Hand.

Saul listened attentively unto David's Words, until he had done speaking; and his Evil Nature being, for the Present, bound down, by the Sense of David's Kindness to him: he cried out, *Is this thy Voice, my Son David?* And with that he brake forth into loud Weeping. And as soon as that Fit of Passion was over, that he had recovered his Speech, he made this ample Acknowledgment to David.

Thou art more Righteous, than I: for thou hast rewarded me good; whereas I have rewarded thee Evil. And thou hast shewed this Day, that thou hast dealt well with me; for as much as, when the Lord had delivered me into thine Hand, thou didst not kill me. For if any Man find his Enemy (at an Advantage) will he let him go safe away? Wherefore the Lord reward thee good, for that thou hast done unto me this Day. And now (added Saul) I know well, that thou shalt surely be King, and that the Kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine Hand. Therefore swear now unto me by the Lord, That thou wilt not cut off my Seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my Name, out of my Father's House.

David thereupon, willing to make Saul as easie as he could, did swear unto him, as he desired. Which wrought so far at that time on Saul, that leaving any further Pursuit of David: he returned home.

But

But *David*, not thinking it safe to trust to fair Words, gat him up, with his Men, unto the Hold : where he is thought to have written the 57th Psalm.

About this time the Prophet *Samuel* dying, the *Israelites* were generally gathered together to lament his Death ; and to bury him amongst his own Family at *Ramah*. And such great and solemn Funerals usually taking up long time, *David* got thereby some respite from his Pursuers. In which time, leaving *Engedi*, he went down to the Wilderness of *Paran*, not far from *Maon* ; where he had been before, chap. 23, 24.

In *Maon* (which signifies a Place of Offence) there dwelt a very great and wealthy Man, whose Name was *Nabal*, of the Posterity of *Caleb* ; a Man of a churlish Nature, and very ill conditioned. But his Wife, whose Name was *Abigail* (which signifies, *The Father's Joy*) was not only a beautiful Dame ; but a Woman of great Discretion and Vertue.

It was then *Sheep-shearing* time with *Nabal*. And he having no less than *Three Thousand* Sheep, must needs have many Shearers ; and could not but make large Provisions for them. Besides, it was the Custom then, for Relations and Neighbours to come in at such a time, and feast together.

David hearing of this Entertainment, and being probably in some strait for Provisions for his Soldiers, chose out *Ten* young Men, and bid them go to *Nabal* at *Carmel* (for there much of his Possessions lay, and there he did shear his Sheep) and salute him in his Name. And thus (said he) shall ye say to him that lives in Plenty ; *Peace be to thee, and Peace be to thy House, and Peace be to all that thou hast*. Then tell him from me, I have heard of his *Sheep-shearing*. And inasmuch as, while his Shepherds were with us, we hurt them not, nor took any thing from them, all the while they were in *Carmel* (as, said he, they will tell thee, if thou ask them :) *Let us therefore find Favour in thine Eyes ; and since we come in a good time, give, I pray thee, what comes to hand, unto us thy Servants, and to thy Son David*.

This Message the young Men went and delivered to *Nabal*, from their Master *David* : and modestly waited his Answer. But *Nabal*, according to his churlish Nature, snapt them up ; scornfully asking, *Who is David ? and who is the Son of Jesse ?* Then reflecting on *David*, for having withdrawn himself from *Saul* ; *There are many Servants*, said he, in these days, that break away every one from his Master : and shall I take my Provisions, that I have prepared for my Shearers ; and give them unto Men whom I know not whence they be ?

David's young Men, being modest Beggars, were so daunted with this rugged Repulse ; that, without replying, they turned away, and went back to *David* with this Answer. At which *David* was so enraged, that arming himself, and commanding his Men to arm, he took about *Four Hundred* of them with him, (leaving the rest to guard his Camp) and marched towards *Carmel* ; with a Resolution to revenge this Affront upon *Nabal*. For he said to his Men, *Surely, in vain have I kept all that this Fellow hath in the Wilderness ; so that nothing was missing of all that belonged to him : and he hath requited me Evil for Good*. Then, binding his Word with a sort of Imprecation, he threatned, not to leave a Man living, of *Nabal's* Family, by the next Morning. Thus went he on in a Soldierly Heat : but God, who had so often prevented his Innocent Blood from being shed, provided a Means now to stop him, from shedding the Innocent Blood of others.

A. M.
2924.

1 Sam. 25. For one of Nabal's Servants, having heard how *roughly* his Master had treated David's Messengers, hasted to his Mistress, and told her, David sent Messengers out of the Wilderness to salute our Master, and he flew upon them with *railing Language*. But indeed the Men were *very good* unto us, and did us *no harm*; neither did we miss any thing, as long as we were conversant with them: but they were rather a *Defence* unto us, both Night and Day, all the while we were with them keeping the Sheep. Now therefore take notice of it, and consider what thou wilt do in the Case: for Evil is determined against our Master, and against all his House; and he is a Man of such an ungoverned Passion, and of so ill a Temper, that one cannot speak to him.

When Abigail heard this, she staid not to consult her Husband, but with all speed ordered her Servants, to take *Two Hundred Loaves* of Bread, and *Two Bottles* of Wine, and *Five Sheep* ready dressed, and *Five Measures* of Parched Corn, and an *Hundred Clusters* of Raisins, and *Two Hundred Cakes* of Figs.

The *Two Bottles* of Wine would not bear Proportion with the other Parts of the Present, nor answer the Occasion, if they should be understood of such Bottles, as are now commonly used, whether of Earth, Stone or Glass. But in those Eastern Countries they used to carry Wine or Water in Leathren Bags or Sacks, made to hold Liquid things; which Vessels they called (at least we Translate them) *Bottles*. Such were those the Gibeonites brought to Joshua's Camp, which they said were *worn out*, Rent or Torn, in their pretended long Journey, Josh. 9. 13. And of such it may be supposed our Saviour Christ spake, Mat. 9. 17. where in a Marginal Note to that which is called the Bishop's Bible, Bottles are explained by *Bags of Leather, or Skin, wherein Wine was carried on Asses or Camels*. And of such Bottles, *Two* might hold a suitable Quantity of Wine.

Having packed up this Present, and laid it on Asses, she bid her Servants go on before, her self following them. And as she, with her Train went down one Hill, David, with his Men, came down the other; so that they met in the Bottom. But she, not dismayed at the Sight of so many armed Men, who she knew were hastening to the Destruction of her Family; as soon as she saw David, she made haste to alight from her Ass; and falling on her Face before him, bowed her self to the Ground at his Feet. This put David to a stand: and while he intently looked on her, she, breaking forth abruptly, thus bespeak him.

Upon me, my Lord, upon me let this Iniquity be; and let thine Handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine Audience: and hear thou the Voice of thine Handmaid. Let not my Lord, I pray thee, regard this Man of Belial, even Nabal: for as is his Name, so is he. Nabal (which signifies a Fool) is his Name: and Folly is with him. But I thine Handmaid saw not the young Men of my Lord, whom thou didst send. Now, therefore, my Lord, as the Lord liveth, and as thy Soul liveth, seeing the Lord hath with-holden thee from coming to shed Blood, and from avenging thy self with thine own Hand; Now let thine Enemies, and they that seek Evil to my Lord, be as Nabal. And now this Present, which thine Handmaid hath brought unto my Lord, let it even be given to the young Men that follow my Lord. I pray thee forgive the Trespas of thine Handmaid; for the Lord will certainly make my Lord a sure House, because my Lord fighteth the Battels of the Lord, and Evil hath not been found in thee all thy Days. Yet a Man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy Soul. But the Soul of my Lord shall be bound in the Bundle of Life with the Lord thy God: and the Souls of thine Enemies shall be sling out, as out of the middle of a Sling. And when the Lord shall have done to my Lord,

according

according to all the Good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee Ruler over Israel, it shall be no Grief unto thee, or Offence of Heart unto my Lord, either that thou hast not shed Blood causeless, or that my Lord hath not revenged himself. But when the Lord shall have dealt well with my Lord, then remember thine Handmaid. 1 Sam. 25.

This so soft and moving Speech, so pacified David, that he said to Abigail, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who sent thee this Day to meet me! And blessed be thy Advice! And blessed be thou, who hast kept me this day from coming to shed Blood; and from avenging myself with mine own Hand! For in very deed, as the Lord God of Israel liveth, who hath kept me back from hurting thee, if thou hadst not hastied, and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal, by the Morning Light, any that pisseth against the Wall.

Then receiving at her Hand what she had brought him, he bid her return to her House in Peace; assuring her that he accepted her Person, and granted her Petition.

When Abigail was come home, she found her Husband kept open House, holding a Feast like the Feast of a King. But observing that he had drunk too liberally, and made himself very drunk; she told him nothing, more or less, of this Business, until the Morning, that he had slept himself a little sober: and then she opened the whole matter to him. Which when he had heard, and considered the Danger his Folly and Rudeness had run him into, his Heart died within him, and he grew stupid as a Stone: and so languishing for about Ten Days time, the Lord then smote him, that he died out-right.

When David heard that Nabal was dead, the Sense of the Justice of God so affected him, that he cried out, Blessed be the Lord, that hath pleaded the Cause of my Reproach from the Hand of Nabal; and hath kept me, his Servant, from doing Evil, in shedding Blood for the Lord hath returned the Wickedness of Nabal upon his own Head.

Afterwards, calling to mind the Comely Personage of Abigail, and with what Wisdom and Discretion she had managed the Business of her Husband with him; David sent some of his chief Servants to her, to acquaint her. That he had a Desire to take her to Wife.

She, when she had heard there Message, bowed her self with her Face to the Earth. And to shew how much she thought her self Honoured by the Offer, she (using an Apostrophe, as if he had been present, and she had spoken to him) said, Let thine Handmaid be a Servant, to wash the Feet of the Servants of my Lord.

Then without more Courtship, she hastened and arose, and riding on an Ass, with Five Damsels to attend her; she followed the Messengers of David, and became his Wife: and David having married also Abinoam of Jezreel, they were both his Wives together: so that David was now possessed at once, of The Brother's Beauty (so Abinoam signified) and The Father's Joy; which is the Meaning of Abigail.

But Michal, David's first Wife, her Father, Saul had taken from him; and given her to Phalti, the Son of Laish, who was of Gallim: a Place in the Tribe of Benjamin; not far from Gibeah, where Saul dwelt.

This had been a time of Rest to David: for Saul had been busied about Burving Samuel. But that Funeral being now over, and Saul returned to Gibeah; the Pick-thank Ziphites came to him again, and informed him, that David had hid himself in the Hill, Hachilah, before their Wilderiness. A. M. 2925.

Upon this Information, Saul went down, with Three Thousand chosen Men of Israel, to seek David in the Wilderiness of Ziph; and pitch his Camp in the Hill of Hachilah. 1 Sam. 26.

David

1 Sam. 26. A. M. 2926. David abode in the Wilderness, and sent forth Spies that he might understand whereabouts Saul lay. And having got certain Information of the Place, he went himself privately, to make his Observation of Saul's Encamping. And having seen where Saul himself lay, in the midst of his Carriages; and Abner, the Son of Ner, Captain of his Host, with the People round about him; David returning to his Company, asked Abimelech the Hittite, and Abishai, (Joab's Brother, Son of Zeruiah, David's Sister) which of them would go with him into the Camp to Saul? his Cousin Abishai offering to go, they went together into the Camp by Night; and found Saul sleeping within the Trench, having his Spear stuck in the Ground at his Bolster: and Abner, with the People lying round about him; but either no Centinels, or all fast asleep.

Fain would Abishai have taken this Advantage to have slain Saul. And therefore urging to David, that God had at that time delivered his Enemy into his Hand; he entreated him, to let him smite Saul but once, and he would strike so home, that he should not need to repeat his Blow.

But David would by no means suffer it; but strictly forbade him: asking him, *Who can stretch forth his Hand against the Lord's Anointed, and be guiltless?* That is (says the Marginal Note, in that which is called the Bishop's Bible) in his own private Cause; for Jehu slew Two Kings, at God's Appointment, 2 Kings 9. 24, 27. Assuredly, said David, The Lord will smite him, or his Day shall come for him to die, or he shall descend into Battel, and perish: but God forbid, that I should stretch forth my Hand against the Lord's Anointed. Yet (said he to Abishai) Take, I pray thee, the Spear that is at his Bolster, and the Cruse of Water; and let us be gone.

So they took the Spear and the Cruse of Water, from Saul's Bolster, and gat them away, so that no Man saw them, nor knew they were there; neither did any of the People awake, but all slept soundly, as well they might: for a deep Sleep from the Lord was upon them.

But when David was got over to the other side, to the Top of an Hill, at a fit distance, and out of Danger; he called aloud to the People, and particularly to Abner the General: who not answering quickly, he called again more earnestly, saying, *Answerest thou not Abner?*

With that, Abner awaking, asked, *Who art thou, that makest such a noise to disturb the King?* Then said David to Abner, *Art not thou a valiant Man? And who is like to thee in Israel? Wherefore then hast thou not kept thy Lord the King? For there came one into the Camp, and might have destroyed the King thy Lord, for all thee. Thou hast not done well, but (by Martial Law) art worthy of Death, thou, and the rest of you; because ye have not better guarded your Master, the Lord's Anointed. And for Proof thereof, See now where the King's Spear is, and the Cruse of Water, that was at his Bolster.*

This Discourse (talked aloud, by reason of the distance) waked Saul indeed. Who hearing David's Tongue, started up, and said, *Is this thy Voice, my Son David?*

Yes, my Lord O King, said David, *it is my Voice. But wherefore doth my Lord thus pursue after his Servant? For what have I done? Or, what Evil is in my Hand? Now therefore, I pray thee (said David) let my Lord the King hear the Words of his Servant. If the Lord hath stirred thee up against me, let him accept an Offering. But if they be the Children of Men that have done it, cursed be they before the Lord: for they have driven me out this Day from abiding in the Inheritance of the Lord, by forcing me to go to the Uncircumcised for Shelter: whereby they have, in effect, said, Go serve other Gods. Now therefore let*
not

not my Blood fall to the Earth, before the Lord; neither disgrace thy self by leading an Army against so mean a Man as I am: which is but as if a great King should go forth with his Host to seek a Flea; or to hunt a Partridge in the Mountains. 1 Sam. 26.

Saul, overcome again, for the present, with David's Generosity and Kindness, cried out, *I have sinned. Return, my Son David, for I will no more do thee harm; because my Life was precious in thine Eyes this Day. I confess I have plaid the Fool, and have erred exceedingly.*

David, then holding out Saul's Spear, said, *See, here is the King's Spear; Let one of the young Men come over, and fetch it: and the Lord reward every Man his Righteousness, and his Faithfulness. For the Lord delivered thee into mine Hand to Day: but I would not stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's Anointed. And as thy Life was precious this Day in mine Eyes: so may my Life be precious in the Eyes of the Lord, and may he deliver me out of all Tribulation.*

Saul, as setting a Seal to David's Wish, said, *Blessed art thou, my Son David; and in a Prophetick Manner, added, Thou shalt both do great things; and also shalt still prevail.* Then parting, David went on his way: and Saul, stopt in himself from pursuing him further at that time, and returned Home.

But tho' David had now escaped again: yet having no Confidence in Saul's Words, and finding the *Ziphites* treacherous to him, he began to be discouraged, and said in his Heart, *I shall yet one day perish by the Hand of Saul,* (meaning, If I continue lurking in this manner.) I conclude therefore (thought he) there is no better way for me to take, than speedily to convey my self into the Land of the *Philistines*: so will Saul despair of finding me, and forbear to seek any further after me; and so shall I escape his Hands. 1 Sam. 27.

Wherefore, having first obtained leave, and safe Conduct from Achish King of Gath, he went over with the Six Hundred Men that were with him, and dwelt with Achish at Gath; he and his Men, every Man with his Household, and David with his Two Wives, *Abinoam* and *Abigail*. And this succeeded according to his Hope: for when Saul understood whither he was gone, he gave over seeking after him.

But David, not liking to be pent up in Gath, and to be always under the Eye, and Observation of the *Philistine-Court*, took an Opportunity, in Discourse with Achish, to say to him. *If I have found Favour in thy Sight, let them give me a Place in some Country-Town, that I may dwell there: for why should thy Servant dwell in the Royal City with thee?* Achish thereupon gave him *Ziklag*: which, tho' *Joshua* had long before assigned to *Judah* (*Josh. 15. 31.*) yet the *Philistines* had got, and kept it from them until now, and henceforward it belong'd to the Kings of *Israel*.

David being now settled in *Ziklag*, divers of Saul's Men fell to him, Men of great Strength and Prowess, and much renowned for their valiant Deeds: whose Names are registred in *1 Chron. 12.* Some of these were of the Tribe of *Gad*; but most of them were of Saul's own Brethren, the Tribe of *Benjamin*. And tho' some of *Judah* came in with them; yet David, observing so many of them to be *Benjamites*, was a little shy of them, lest they were sent as *Spies*, to betray him: till they gave him Assurance that they came with sincere Minds to join with him; and help him; and then he made them Captains over his Bands.

Strengthened with these Recruits, he went up with his Men, and invaded the *Geshurites*, and the *Gezrites*, and the *Amalekites*, and cutting them all off, left neither Man nor Woman alive, that there might

be none to bring Tidings to *Gath* of what he had done, and so make
 1 Sam. 28. the *Philistines* weary of him. Then returning to *Ziklag*, with a great
 Booty of Cartel, and other Spoils, he went afterwards to visit King
Achish; who asking him, whither he had made a Road that time, and
 being told that he went against the South of *Judah*, and against the
 South of the *Ferameelites* (who sprang from *Judah* by *Thamar*) and
 against the South of the *Kenites* (the Posterity of *Jethro*, *Moses* his
 Father-in-law) all which were either of *Israel*, or Friends and Allies to
Israel, and Enemies to the *Philistines*; *Achish*, believing *David* therein,
 was well enough pleased with his Expedition: and reckoning *David* had
 thereby made himself hateful to his own People, he put the greater Con-
 fidence in him, and concluded he should be his Servant for ever.

But this could not have been long undiscovered, had not the *Philistines*
 been wholly intent at the same time, upon a War with *Israel*. which
 tho' it served to hide the Havock *David* had lately made upon their
 Friends; yet it brought upon *David* a very great Exercise.

For the *Philistines* drawing out their Forces, to fight against *Israel*;
Achish, sending for *David*, gave him notice, that he was resolved he
 and his Men should go with him to the Battel.

This was an hard pinch upon *David*: but not being in a Condition
 to deny, he briskly answered, *Thou shalt see then what Service I can do*.
 Well, replied *Achish*, *If thou behave thy self bravely, I'll make thee Cap-*
tain of my Guards for ever.

David, no doubt, was now in a great Streight between Two. On
 the one Hand, To draw his Sword against his own King, the Lord's
 Anointed; against his own Nation, the peculiar People of God; against
 those who were to be his own Subjects; was an Act too unnatural to be
 thought on, without Horror. On the other Hand, to betray the Trust,
 reposed in him by a Prince, (who tho' an Heathen and an Enemy) had
 so courteously received him in Distress, so kindly entertained him, so
 nobly provided for him, and so confidently relied on him; and to turn
 against him in the Battel, would be so ungrateful and base an Act, that
 Death it self was rather to be chosen: and yet, humanly speaking,
 there appeared no way to avoid one of these Evils. But God found a
 way to deliver *David* out of this great Streight: which we must seek in
 Chap. 29.

For when the *Philistines* had drawn their Forces together to a gene-
 ral Rendezvous at *Aphék*, the Lords of the *Philistines* passing on by
 Hundreds, and by Thousands, and *David* with his Men coming up in
 the Reer with King *Achish*; the Princes of the *Philistines* began to
 pick a Quarrel with *David* and his Men, asking *What do these Hebrews*
here? *Achish* told them, That was *David*, who had been Servant of
Saul King of *Israel*; but revolting from *Saul*, had been with him a con-
 siderable time (supposed to be about Four Months) and he had never
 found but he was trusty to him ever since he came.

But the Princes of the *Philistines* were not willing to trust him. And
 therefore they somewhat peremptorily said to their King, *Make this*
Fellow return, that he may go to Ziklag (the Place thou hast appointed
 him;) *and let him not go down with us to the Battel, lest in the Battel he*
turn against us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself to his Master,
but with our Heads? For is not this that *David*, of whom the Hebrew-
 women sang one to another in Dances, *Saul* hath slain his Thousands,
 and *David* his Ten Thousands?

1 Sam. 29. *Achish*, finding his Lords so resolute, and not thinking that a fit
 time to contend with them, took *David* aside, and acknowledging his
 Fidelity, and how acceptable his Services had hitherto been to him: let
 him

him know, that the Lords of the *Philistines* did not favour him; and therefore wisht him to return peaceably to *Ziklag*, that he might not displease them. 1 Sam. 29.

Tho' this was the most *welcome thing* that could be to *David*: yet that he might seem rather to *submit to it*, than *desire it*, he began to *expostulate* with *Achish*; asking him, *What have I done? What hast thou found in thy Servant from the time I came to thee, unto this day, that I may not go fight against the Enemies of my Lord the King?*

Nay, replied *Achish*, *thou art to me as an Angel of God*. But the Princes of the *Philistines* have said, *He shall not go up with us to the Battel*. Wherefore now, said he, *Get up betimes in the Morning, and as soon as it is light, depart with thy Master's Servants that came with thee*.

Glad to be thus *fairly dismissed*, *David* with his Men departed early next Morning, to return to *Ziklag*; having encreased his Numbers in this Expedition. For some of the Tribe of *Manasseh* fell in with him, as he marched from *Ziklag* to join the *Philistines* Army; and others fell to him now in his Return back, who did him good Service afterwards.

But *Saul*, mean while, was in great *Perplexity*. For having (as we read in *Chap. 28. 4, &c.*) taken a View of the *Philistines* Host, while they were in *Shunem*, before they came to *Aphék*; when he saw their Strength (which *Aphék* signifies) Fear seized on him, and his Heart greatly trembled. And now, *destitute of other Helps*, he would have enquired of the Lord: But the Lord would not Answer him; neither by *Dream*, nor by *Urim*, nor by *Prophets*. How just was this upon him! For he had destroyed the *Priests*, by whom he should have enquired: and the Prophet *Samuel*, whom also he had slighted, was gone to rest. 1 Sam. 28.

He would now have been glad to consult a *Wizard*. But, that he might shew some Zeal for the Law of God, he had banished the *Wizards*, and those that had *familiar Spirits*, out of the Land. Yet in this Streight, he bids his Servants seek him out a Woman that had a familiar Spirit, that he might enquire of her. They told him there was such a Woman at *En-dor* (a Town in the Tribe of *Manasseh*.) Whereupon *Saul*, disguising himself, took Two Men with him, and went to the Woman by Night; and desired her to *divine* unto him by the *familiar Spirit*, and bring up to him whom he should name to her.

She, little thinking he had been *Saul*, said to him, *Alas! Thou knowest what Saul hath done; how he hath cut off those that had familiar Spirits, and the Wizards, out of the Land: Wherefore then dost thou lay a Snare for my Life, to cause me to die?* But *Saul* swearing to her by the Lord, that there should no Punishment happen to her for this thing: she asked him, *Whom she should bring up to him?* and he said, *Bring me up Samuel*.

She then raising an *Evil Spirit*, which came in the Likeness of *Samuel*; when she saw it, she cried out, and said to *Saul*, *Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul*: which it is supposed she learned by the Spirit she had raised. *Saul* bid her not be afraid: and asked her what she had seen? she told him, she saw *Ghosts* (so she called those *diabolical Apparitions*, which Satan uses to further his *Illusions*) ascending out of the Earth. *Saul* not satisfied with that Answer, asked her, *What Form* he was of, that was coming up? She replied, *An Old Man cometh up, and is covered with a Mantle*. *Saul*, by that, concluding that it was *Samuel* (who, good Man, was at rest, out of the reach of *Saul*, the Witch and the Devil) stooped down with his Face towards the Ground, and bowed himself, thereby expressing that Respect to the Devil, that he would have done to *Samuel*.

The

The Apparition, that it might aptly personate Samuel, asked Saul, 1 Sam. 28. Why he had disquieted him, to bring him up? Saul, to excuse the Trouble he had given him, told him he was sore distressed: for the Philistines (said he) make War upon me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by Prophets, nor by Dreams. Therefore I have called thee, that thou mayst make known unto me what I shall do.

Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, said the pretended Samuel, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine Enemy? Then going on, in personating Samuel, he added, The Lord hath done as he spake by me: For the Lord hath rent the Kingdom out of thy Hand, and given it to thy Neighbour, even to David. And this the Lord hath done to thee, because thou obeyedst not the Voice of the Lord, to execute his fierce Wrath upon Amalek. Moreover, said he, the Lord will also deliver the Host of Israel, together with thee, into the Hands of the Philistines: and to morrow thou and thy Sons shall be with me, That is, shall be dead, as Samuel is, whom thou takest me for.

At that Word, Fear so possessed dis-spirited Saul, that (his Strength also, through long fasting, failing him: for he had eaten nothing all the Day before, nor all that Night) he fell all along on the Earth. Which when the Witch saw, she came to him, and earnestly entreated him to let her set some Food before him, and that he would eat. But he refused, until his Servants, together with the Woman, did even compel him to consent. And then, having a fat Calf in the Stall, she quickly killed it; and kneading some Flour, baked unleavened Cakes: of which Saul and his Servants did eat, and then returned to his Camp the same Night.

A. M. While Saul was thus distressed, a very great Exercise befel poor David. 2927. For when he, after Three Days march, came weary back from the Philistines Camp to Ziklag; he found the Town in great part laid in Ashes, his Wives, and all the rest of the Women and Children carried away Captives, and their Goods and Cattel made a Prey.

1 Sam. 30. This so great and unexpected Calamity, did so deeply affect David and his Men; that lifting up their Voice they wept, till they could weep no longer. And indeed, David had cause enough to weep. For he had not only lost both his Wives, and whatsoever else he had there: but was in danger to lose his Life also: for the People, in the height of their Grief, their Passion over-powering their Reason, threatened to stone him.

In this Distress, David had recourse to the Lord his God, for Comfort and Encouragement. And calling to Abiathar the Priest, to bring him the Ephod, he enquired of the Lord, If he should pursue after that Troop of Robbers, that had sacked and fired the Town; and if he should overtake them. And the Lord bid him pursue; assuring him, that he should not only overtake them, but should recover the Captives, and all the Spoil.

With this Encouragement David and his Men set forward upon the Pursuit. But by that time they were come to the Brook Besor, Two Hundred of his Men were so weary, and spent with their three Days March before, and now again; that not able to pass over the Brook, they were fain to stay behind there, while David, with Four Hundred Men, continued the Pursuit.

These, as they went on, found a poor Stragler, half Dead, and speechless for want of Food; for he had neither eaten nor drank for Three Days and Nights. Him they brought to David. And when they had given him some Bread and Water, to eat and drink, and a piece of a Cake of Figs, with some Raisins, to cheer his Spirits, he began to revive. Then

Then *David* asking him whence he was, and to whom he belonged; the Fellow told him he was an *Egyptian*, but Servant to an *Amalekite*, ^{1 Sam. 30.} That they had made an *Invasion* upon the South of the *Cherethites* (who were of the *Philistines*) and upon the Coast of *Judah*, and upon the Coast of *Caleb*; and we burnt *Ziklag* (said he) with Fire: And because I fell sick three Days ago, my Master left me here.

But canst thou, said *David*, bring me down to this Company? Yes, said he: And if thou wilt swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the Hands of my Master, I will bring thee down to them. And accordingly he did bring them to the Place, where this Troop of *Amalekites* lay scattered about upon the ground, eating and drinking and dancing, for joy of the great Spoil they had taken.

But when *David* came at them, he and his Men flew with that Fury and Force upon them, that he cut them all off, not suffering a Man of them to escape; except *Four Hundred* young Men, who being mounted on Camels, fled and got away.

Thus *David* rescued his Two Wives, and recovered all that the *Amalekites* had carried away; so that there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, Sons nor Daughters, neither Spoil, nor any thing that had been taken from them: But *David* recovered all. And besides what they had taken from him, he took the Flocks and Herds, which those *Rovers* had taken, from the *Philistines* and others, in that Expedition. And this his Men drave before their own Cattel, calling it *David's Spoils*.

Then marching back towards the Brook *Besor*, the *Two Hundred* Men which he had left there (having by this time a little rested and refreshed themselves) came out to meet him, and gratulate his good Success.

These *David* courteously saluted, asking them how they did? And when afterwards mention was made of dividing the Spoil, some churlish Fellows, amongst those that had gone through, began to object; alleging, that because those *Two Hundred* went not with them in the Pursuit, they should not have any of the Spoil that was recovered, save every Man his Wife and Children, and his own proper Goods: Which they might take and be gone.

But *David* putting them in mind, that it was not merely by their own Prowess, but by God's Providence they had gotten all the Spoil, told them in a gentle way, Ye must not do so, my Brethren, with that which the Lord hath given us; who hath preserved us, and delivered the Company that came against us, into our Hand. For who (said he) will hearken to you in this matter? But as his part is that goeth to the Battel; so ought his part to be that tarrieth by the Stuff: Let them part it equally. And this, from that time forward, became a Statute and Ordinance in *Israel*.

Now when *David* was returned to *Ziklag*, he took of the Spoil, and sent it up and down amongst his Friends, the Elders of *Judah*, in divers Places, those more especially where he and his Men were wont to haunt; letting them know, it was a Present for them, of the Spoil of the Enemies of the Lord. ^{1 Sam. 31.}

But while *David* had been thus exercised, the Two great Armies of the *Philistines* and the *Israelites*, having joined Battel, the *Philistines* prevailed; and the Men of *Israel* flying before them, fell down slain in Mount *Gilboa*. Whereupon the *Philistines* pressing hard upon *Saul* and his Sons, slew *Jonathan*, and *Abinadab*, and *Malchishua*, Three of *Saul's* Sons: And followed *Saul* so close, that coming within Bow-shot of him, the Archers hit him, and wounded him forely. ^{A. M. 2970.}

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He,

He, feeling himself *mortally* wounded, called to his Armour-bearer, and bid him draw his Sword, and thrust him through. *Left those Uncircumcised should overtake him, and thrust him through, or put him to some Ignominious Death*: But his Armour-bearer, being himself in great Fear, refused. Whereupon Saul, seeing no other Remedy, *fell upon his own Sword*, and died. Which when his Armour-bearer saw, he fell also upon his Sword, and died with his Master. So Saul died, and his Three Sons, and his Armour-bearer, and all his Men (for it was a general Rout and Slaughter) that same day together.

Next Day, when the *Philistines* came to strip the Slain, finding Saul and his Three Sons fallen in Mount Gilboa, they *cut off his Head*, and *stripped off his Armour*, and sending Messengers into the Land of the *Philistines* round about, to publish their Victory in the House of their Idols, and among the People, they put his *Armour* in the House of *Asheroth* (one of their chief Idols.) But his *Body*, with the *Bodies* of his Sons, *they fastned to the Wall of Bethshan*.

But when the Inhabitants of *Jabesh-gilead* heard, how *reproachfully* the *Philistines* had hung up the Bodies of Saul and his Sons, they (in a *grateful remembrance* of the good Service he had done them, in delivering them from *Nabash*, King of the *Ammonites*, 1 Sam. 11.) selecting out all the valiant Men amongst them, went all Night, and took the Body of Saul, and the *Bodies* of his Three Sons, from the Wall of *Bethshan*, and having brought them to *Jabesh*, first *burned* them, till the Flesh was consumed, to prevent their being taken up again: And then *burying* the Bones under a Tree at *Jabesh*; fasted seven Days, in Token of Mourning.

This Victory proved the more advantagious to the *Philistines*, for that the Men of *Israel*, that were on the other side of the Valley, wherein the Battel was fought, and they also that were on the other side of *Jordon*; when they understood, that the Host of *Israel* fled, and that Saul and his Sons were dead, *forsook their Cities* and fled, and the *Philistines* came and dwelt in them.

2 Sam. 1. By that time David had been Two Days returned to *Ziklag*, from the Slaughter of the *Amalekites* that had sacked and fired it, came a Man on the Third Day, with his Cloaths rent, and Earth upon his Head; as the manner was in those times and Countries, in Cases of extraordinary Sorrow: And being come to David, he fell to the Earth, and did Obeyfance.

David asking him whence he came; and he answered, *Out of the Camp of Israel* am I escaped: Tell me then, I pray thee, said David, *How went the Matter*? He answering, The People are *fled* from the Battel, and many of them are *fallen* and dead; and among the rest Saul, and *Jonathan* his Son: David asked him, how he knew that Saul and *Jonathan* were dead. Whereupon he gave him this particular Account.

As I happened (said he) by chance to be upon Mount Gilboa, I saw Saul *leaning upon his Spear*, and the Chariots and Horsemen following hard after him. And when, looking behind him, he saw me, he called me to him; and having asked who I was, he desired me to fall upon him and kill him: For tho' he had fallen upon his own Sword, yet his Coat of Mail hindring his Sword from piercing to his Heart, he was still Heart-whole; but in Anguish. Whereupon, being sure he could not live after he was fallen; I fell upon him and slew him: And taking the Crown that was upon his Head, and the Bracelet that was upon his Arm, have brought them *hither unto my Lord*.

When

When *David* had heard this *sorrowful* News, *too well* confirmed by the Sight of the Crown and Bracelet; he rent his Cloaths, as did also all the Men that were with him: And Mourning and Weeping, fasted until the Evening for *Saul*, and for *Jonathan* his Son, and for the People of the Lord, and for the House of *Israel*, because they were fallen by the Sword.

Then calling to him again the young Man, that had brought him this Account, he examined him what Country-man he was. Who telling him, he was the Son of a Stranger, an *Amalekite*; *David* asked him, *How he durst stretch forth his Hand, without Fear, to destroy the Lord's Anointed.* But seeing, said *David*, Thou art convicted by thy own Confession, *thy Blood be upon thine own Head.* Then calling to one of his Guards, he bid him, *Go fall upon him:* Which the Soldier did, and slew him. Afterwards *David* lamented over *Saul*, and over *Jonathan* his Son, a Funeral Elegy: Which read in 2 *Samuel* 1. from Verse 19. to the end.

THE

THE HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF NEW-YORK

From the first settlement of the Dutch in 1624 to the present time. By J. B. H. ...

T H E
Second B O O K
O F
S A M U E L;
Including the
First B O O K
O F
C H R O N I C L E S:

And containing an History of 40 Years.

P A R T III.

ALTHO' *Saul* was slain, and *Three* of his Sons with ^{2 Sam. 2.} him; yet he had *another* Son living, whose Name ^{A. M.} was *Ish-bosheth*, and a valiant General, named *Abner*: And whom the People would set up for King, ^{2949.} was very uncertain. *David* therefore being yet at *Ziklag*, and not knowing whether he might venture into any of the Cities of *Judah*; that he might act *Safely*, having the Priest and the Ephod with him, he enquired of the Lord, and the Lord directing him to go to *Hebron*, he went thither, taking with him his Two Wives *Abinoam* and *Abigail*, and all his Men: Whom he placed every Man with his Household, in the Cities of *Hebron*.

Long he had not been in *Hebron*, before the Men of *Judah* came to congratulate his Return, and (for their parts) to offer him the Crown.

B b b b

And

And before they left him, they Anointed him King over *Judah*: Which
 2 Sam. 2. was as far as they could go.

David, understanding by them, that the Men of *Jabesh-gilead* had buried *Saul*, he sent Messengers to them; and together with giving them Thanks, for performing that kind Office to his Father-in-law, he took occasion to let them know, that he was now King of *Judah*; and would requite that Kindness to them, which was a fair Invitation to them also, to proclaim him King there.

But *Abner*, who was General of all the Forces that had been *Saul's*, took *Ish-bosheth*, the Son of *Saul*, who was then Forty years of Age; and bringing him to *Mahanaim* (which was the place where *Jacob*, returning from *Laban*, was met by the Angels of God, *Gen.* 32. 1, 2.) he made him King over all *Israel*.

Thus was this New Kingdom quickly divided, *Judah* following *David*: And *Israel* sticking to *Saul's* Son *Ish-bosheth*. But this Rent, being but of Man's making, lasted not long, ere God found means to make it up again.

Yet in the mean time, some Bickerings happened between the Forces of these Rival Kings. For *Abner*, drawing out King *Ish-bosheth's* Forces, marched them from *Mahanaim* to *Gibeon*. Which *Joab*, Captain-general of King *David's* Forces (and Son to *Zeruiab*, *David's* Sister) understanding; he also led forth *David's* Men: And at the Pool of *Gibeon*, the Two Armies meeting sat down in fight of one another, having the Pool between them.

After a while, *Abner* provoked *Joab* to send forth a Party to Skirmish. Which *Joab* agreeing to, Twelve of a side issued forth of each Camp. These fighting, not in Bodies, but single-handed, Man to Man; every one caught his Fellow by the Head, and thrusting each other thro' the Body, they all fell down together. From which bold and resolute Action, that Place was called *Helkath-Hazzurim* that is, *The Field of strong Men*.

This desperate Resolution of these *Forlorn-hopes*, so heated the Spirits of the Soldiers on either side, that, the Armies presently joining, a sharp Battel was fought between them: Wherein *David's* Men, at length prevailing, *Abner* was beaten, and forced to fly.

Ish-bosheth's Men thus routed, *Asabel*, (*Joab's* younger Brother, a very nimble-footed Youth,) in the Pursuit took after *Abner*, and followed him so close, that *Abner* finding he could not escape him by running, turned again, and made a stand, to see what he was that followed him so hard. And observing him to be but a Youth, and understanding withal, that he was *Joab's* Brother; he wished him to give over pursuing him, and take some other Prisoner for his Prey: But *Asabel* would not turn aside from following him.

Abner went a little further; But finding that *Asabel* still pressed upon him, he spake to him again, desiring him to turn from him, and leave him: For why (said he) shouldst thou provoke me to kill thee? And how shall I look upon thy Brother *Joab* when I have done it?

But young *Asabel*, ambitious of the Honour of taking the General Prisoner, would by no intreaty be perswaded to leave him; but still pressed harder on him. Which when *Abner* saw, and that, unless he would be his Prisoner, there was no way but to kill or be killed, he smote him with the hinder end of his Spear, under the Fifth Rib, so that the Spear came out behind him, and down he fell dead in the Place.

His falling and lying there, gave Opportunity to *Abner* to escape: for tho' *Joab* and *Abishai* (his other Brother) with many others pursued *Abner* also; yet when they came to the Place where *Asabel* lay

lay dead, they all stood still. So that *Abner* got time to rally what he could of his scattered Forces, and having drawn them up together into ^{2 Sam. 2.} one Troop, made a stand with them on the Top of an Hill.

Then sounding a *Parley*, he called to *Joab*, and putting him in mind that they were all *Brethren*, both by *Nation* and *Religion*, he asked him if he intended *the Sword should devour for ever*, and did not consider that it would be *bitterness in the latter end*, that he was so backward to sound a *Retreat*? Whereupon *Joab*, letting him know that the People (if he had not spoken) would have given over the *Pursuit* in the Morning, sounded a *Retreat*: And so *Abner* with his Men travelling all Night, through the Plain, and over *Jordan*, got back to *Mahanaim*; and *Joab* with his Men, marching all Night also, reached *Hebron* by break of Day. And altho' they had fought so fiercely, yet the Number of the Slain was not great on either side: For *Abner* lost but Three Hundred and Sixty Men; and *Joab* but Nineteen, beside his Brother *Asabel*.

But tho' they parted thus now, yet *Hostilities* did not cease between the Two Kings and their Subjects: For the War continued long between ^{2 Sam. 3.} the Two Houses. Wherein tho' *Abner* strengthened himself, as much as he could, for the House of *Saul*: Yet *the House of David* grew stronger and stronger; and *the House of Saul* grew weaker and weaker. And yet, *Ish-bosheth* might probably have held it out longer, had it not been for an Accident which his own Indiscretion brought upon him: By which he lost *Abner* from his Interest; and with him all Strength and Courage. It happened thus.

Saul had a Concubine whose Name was *Rizpah*; whom *Ish-bosheth* charged *Abner* with having lain with. *Abner* a Man of high Stomach, took this for a great Affront; and in high Displeasure said to King *Ish-bosheth*, *Am I a Dog's Head* (that is, Am I as contemptible with thee as a Dog) I who have shewed thus much kindness unto the House of *Saul* thy Father, to his Brethren, and to his Friends, against *Judah*, and have not delivered thee into the Hand of *David*, that thou chargest me with a Fault concerning this Woman? So do God to *Abner*, and more also, except as the Lord hath Sworn to *David*, even so I do to him; to translate the Kingdom from the House of *Saul*, and to set up the Throne of *David* over *Israel* and over *Judah*, from one end of the Land to the other.

Whether the Charge was true, or no; *Ish-bosheth*, a poor low-spirited Prince, was so struck with this lofty Language of *Abner*, that he could not answer him a Word again. And *Abner*, being in good earnest, sent Agents to *David*, to transact the Matter on his behalf; giving them in charge, to acknowledge *David's* Title, and to assure him, that if he would make a League with him, he would use his Interest to bring over all *Israel* to him.

David consented on those Terms, to make such a League with him. But one thing he required of him, previous thereunto; which was, that he should bring with him his Wife *Michal*, the Daughter of *Saul*: Otherwise, he let him know, he would not so much as see him.

David sent also Ambassadors to *Ish-bosheth*, to demand of him his Wife *Michal*. Whereupon *Ish-bosheth* sent and took her from her Husband *Phaltiel*, and sent her to *David*, the poor Man her Husband following her Weeping, as far as to *Baburim*, where *Abner* meeting with him turned him back.

Abner mean while practised with the Elders of *Israel*, to bring them over to *David*, thus discoursing with them; *Ye sought for David in times past, to be King over you. Now therefore, seeing David is the Man, by whom*

2 Sam. 3. whom the Lord hath said, he will save his People Israel out of the Hand of the Philistines, and from all their Enemies, pursue your former Desire, and make him your King.

Neither did he tamper only with the Israelites in general; but particularly with the Elders of Benjamin, who were more immediately concerned for the House of Saul. And when he found he had gained his Point upon them, he then went to Hebron, taking only Twenty Men with him, and presented himself to David.

David received Abner, and his Men, courteously: And to shew the regard he had to him, he made a Feast for them, after which, Abner taking his leave of David, told him, He would go and gather all Israel unto him, that they might make a League with him; and that he might reign over them all, according to his Heart's Desire.

Abner was but newly gone, in a manner, from Hebron, when Joab (David's General, who during the time that Abner had been with David, had been out with a Party, upon an Expedition against the Philistines) returned with a great Spoil, to Hebron. And being quickly told, by some of his Creatures, That Abner had been there; and that the King had received and entertained him kindly, and dismissed him peaceably, he was much disturbed at it: For Joab hated Abner for more Causes than one. Not only because he had slain his Brother Asabel; but for that he doubted, if Abner should bring over Israel to David, and by that means ingratiate himself with the King, he himself might be in Danger of being supplanted by him: For Abner was a Man of great Courage and Conduct, and had withal great Interest in the People.

Joab therefore hastening to King David, in a rough and souldierly manner, asked him, What he had done? It seems, said he, Abner came unto thee: How is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone? Then suggesting to David, that Abner came only as a Spie, to see his Strength, and observe the State of his Affairs, that he might deceive him; he went out from David, and sent Messengers after Abner, to bring him back again; (as if David had something further to say to him) whereas David knew nothing of it.

Abner thinking no harm, nor suspecting any Danger, returned; and as soon as he was come to Hebron, Joab, who waited for that purpose, took him aside in the Gate, in a shew of Friendship, and under pretence of some private Business, there basely stabb'd him to Death: Pretending that he did it in Revenge of the Death of Asabel his Brother, whom Abner, in his own Defence, had slain in Battel.

When David heard of this barbarous Murther, he cried out, I and my Kingdom are guiltless before the Lord for ever, from the Blood of Abner. Let it rest on the Head of Joab, and of all his Father's House: And let the House of Joab never be without one that hath an Issue, or that is a Leper (and so is legally unclean) or that (thro' Weakness or Infirmary) leaneth upon a Staff, or that wanteth Bread.

Then commanding Joab and all the People that were with him to rend their Clothes, and girding themselves with Sack-cloth to mourn before Abner, King David himself following the Bier; they buried Abner in Hebron. At which the King, lifting up his Voice, wept at the Grave of Abner, and all the People wept also. But the King more especially lamented over Abner, saying, Died Abner as a Fool dieth? Thy Hands were not bound, nor thy Feet put into Fetters; but as a Man falleth before wicked Men, so fellest thou: And with that all the People wept again over him. And when (according to the Custom they then had of Feasting at Burials) they came to invite David to eat, he utterly refused, solemnly

solemnly binding himself not to taste of any Food, until the Sun was set. 2 Sam. 3.

This Carriage of David's the People took great notice of; and (as they generally liked what he did) they were much pleased with this: For from hence all concluded that David was not consenting, nor any way privy to Abner's Death.

But to his Domestick Servants the King complained more particularly; and bewailing his own Condition, said, *Know ye not that a Prince, and a great Man is fallen this Day in Israel? And I, tho' Anointed King, am yet but weak, and not well settled in my Kingdom: And these Men, the Sons of Zeruiab (to wit) Joab and his Brother Abishai; for Abishai also was in the Plot against Abner, ver. 30.) are too hard for me.* Therefore I cannot now call them to Account for it: But must leave them to the Lord, who will reward the Doer of Evil according to his Wickedness.

And indeed, besides the Baseness of this Murther, which such a Man as David could not but abhor; he had great Cause to lament this untimely Death of Abner, with respect to his own Affairs: For it robbed him of a most serviceable and beneficial Friend, broke all the Measures they had taken, for uniting the Two Kingdoms, and was likely to endanger his losing the Israelitish Crown, had Ish-bosheth, who then wore it, lived longer.

But this Murther of Abner was followed by another, not less treacherous nor inhuman. For Ish-bosheth, Saul's Son (whom Abner had set upon the Throne of Israel) was greatly dejected, and even dispirited, when he heard of Abner's Death; and the Israelites in general were much troubled for the loss of their Captain-General: So that Ish-bosheth their King was little regarded, and less guarded.

This gave Encouragement to Two Ruffians to conspire his Death; to which they might probably be the more emboldened from a Consideration, that of Saul's legitimate Stock there was none left, who were in a Condition to Revenge his Death upon them. For Mephibosheth, Jonathan's Son, was but a Child of Seven Years old; and lame too of his Feet, by a Fall which his Nurse let him take, when she fled in haste with him, upon the Report that his Father and Grandfather were slain. 2 Sam. 4.

These Two Regicides, whose Names were Baanab and Rechab, were Brothers, Sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, belonging to Benjamin; and were Captains of Bands: But some think of Rovers, that lived by Spoil and Pillage. These coming to Ishbosheth's House, about the middle of the Day, under pretence of fetching Wheat, (so little odds, it seems, there was between the Palace and the Granary) went directly into his Bed-chamber: Where finding the King lying on a Bed, because it was the Heat of the Day, they slew him, and cut off his Head, in the Second Year of his Reign. Then, taking the Head with them, they went out again undiscovered; and travelled all night thro' the Plain towards Hebron: conceiving high Hopes, that they should be welcome Guests to David, bringing with them such a Present. In Expectation whereof, being come to Hebron, they presented the Head to David, with this short Speech; *Behold the Head of Ish-bosheth the Son of Saul thine Enemy, which sought thy Life: And the Lord hath avenged my Lord the King this Day of Saul, and of his Seed.* A. M.
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But David, filled with Horror and Indignation, at the Sight of the Murthered King's Head, said to these bloody Regicides, *As the Lord liveth, who hath redeemed my Soul out of all Adversity, when one came and brought me Tidings of Saul's Death, supposing he had brought me acceptable*

ceptable News; Nay, and brought me also the Crown and Bracelet which
 2 Sam. 4. Saul wore, expecting I would have given him a Reward: Yet when I understood by him, that he had a Hand in his Death, I caused him to be seized on, and slain in Ziklag. How much more then, when such Wicked Men as ye are, have slain a Righteous Person (one that had done you no wrong) in his own House (where he ought to have been safe) and upon his Bed? (where he could not defend himself;) Shall I not therefore now require his Blood of your Hand, and cut you off from the Earth! Then commanding his Guards to fall upon them, they slew them; and having cut off their Hands and Feet, hanged them up over the Pool in Hebron: But the Head of Ish-bosheth they buried in the Sepulchre of Abner in Hebron.

2 Sam. 5. This Murther of Ish-bosheth made way for the uniting the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah into one again. For upon his Death, all the Tribes of Israel (that is, the Elders, or Heads of the Tribes) came unto David at Hebron; and having, as an Introduction, told him, They were of his Bone and Flesh: And in Times past, even when Saul was their King, he was their Captain, that led them out and in; and that it was of him that the Lord had said, *Thou shalt feed my People Israel*, and shalt be a Captain over them: David thereupon making a League with them, they Anointed him King over Israel, and at Hebron they were feasted Three Days together.

David had lived now about Two Years in Hebron, and Five Years more he lived there: For he is said to have reigned Seven Years in Hebron. And having now the united Forces of Israel and Judah under his Command, he led forth his Men to Jerusalem, against the Jebusites, the Inhabitants of the Land. Who trusting too much to the Strength of the Place, told David in derision, *Except he took away the Blind and the Lame, he should not come in thither*. Implying, the Place was so strong, that if there were none but Blind and Lame to defend it, he with all his Forces could not take it.

David, resolving to correct their Insolence, caused Proclamation to be made That whosoever should scale the Fort, by getting up into the Gutter, and should smite the Jebusites with their Lame and their Blind, who had made themselves hateful to David he should be Captain General of all his Forces.

This Joab, David's Sister's Son, who had command before of the Forces of Judah, performed. By which means David took the strong Hold of Zion, in which he afterwards dwelt: And when he had built it round about from Millo (or the Fortrefs) and inward, it was called, *The City of David*.

Now began David's Affairs to prosper, and his Fame to spread: For the Lord God of Hosts was with him; and he perceived that the Lord had established him King over Israel. Which his Neighbours also took notice of; and thereupon Hiram, King of Tyre, sent Ambassadors to David, to congratulate his Accession to the Crown, and to make him a Present of Cedar-Trees, and Workmen to build him a Palace.

On the other hand, when the Philistines heard that the Israel s had anointed David for their King, they came up to seek him, spreading themselves in the Valley of Rephaim: Whereupon David went down to the Hold. But before he would go forth against them, he enquired of the Lord, *If he should go?* And if the Lord would deliver them into his hand? And the Lord bidding him Go, and assuring him that he would deliver them to him, he marched forth against them, and smote them, and put them to the Rout: So that they fled, and for haste left their
 Images

Images behind them, which *David* and his Men *burnt*. The Place, where this Battel was fought, *David* called *Baal-perazim*, that is, the Plain of Breaches, or Divisions; giving this Reason for the Name, *The Lord hath broken forth upon mine Enemies before me, as the Breach of Waters.* 2 Sam. 5.

Yet long it was not ere the *Philistines*, having levied new Forces, came up again; and spreading themselves in the Valley of *Rephaim*, offered *David* Battel.

David would not presume upon his late Success: but enquired of the Lord again. And now the Lord bid him not go up, that is, directly to engage them; but *fetch a Compass* behind them, and come upon them, over-against the Mulberry-Trees: and when he should hear the Sound of a *Going* in the Tops of the Mulberry-Trees, then he should *bestir* himself; for then the Lord would go out before him, to smite the Host of the *Philistines*. And *David* doing so, as the Lord had commanded him, he smote the *Philistines* with a great Slaughter.

Having by this means now gotten a time of Quiet and Respite from War, *David* consulting his Captains and chief Leaders, said to all the Congregation of *Israel*, *If it seem good unto you, and that if it be of the Lord our God, Let us send abroad unto our Brethren every-where, that are left in the Land of Israel, and with them also to the Priests and Levites, in their Cities and Suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us. And let us bring again the Ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul,* 2 Sam. 6.
1 Chron. 13.

To this Proposal the whole Congregation assenting, as a thing that all the People approved; *David* gathering the People together, went up with them to *Baalab* (otherwise called *Kirjath-jearim*) belonging to *Judath*, to bring up from thence the Ark of God, whose Name is called by the Name of the Lord of Hosts, that dwelleth between the Cherubims.

The Ark is said to have been *Twenty Years* in the House of *Abinadab*, at *Kirjath-jearim*, *1 Sam. 7. 1, 2.* But that *Twenty Years* must be referred to the time of the single Administration of *Samuel* in the Government: for the Ark was taken in the last Year of *Eli*, and the *Philistines* kept it but *Seven Months*, *1 Sam. 6. 1.* *Samuel* succeeding to *Eli* in the Government, is reckoned to have judged *Israel* by himself *Twenty Years*, before there was a King, and *Twenty Years* more are allotted to *Samuel* and *Saul* together, and to *Saul* by himself after *Samuel*. So that from the Death of *Eli*, when the Ark was taken, to the Death of *Saul*, must be *Forty Years*. And tho' *Seven Months* of that time it was with the *Philistines*: Yet *David* having after *Saul's* Death, reigned *Seven Years* and *Six Months* in *Hebron*, and some time after that, in *Jerusalem*, before he went to fetch up the Ark, it could not be much less than *Fifty Years* that the Ark had been at *Kirjath-jearim*, in the House of *Abinadab*.

Thither went *David* and the *Israelites*, to fetch it from thence, and bring it to *Jerusalem*. But not minding the Law, which required them to carry the Ark upon their Shoulders, *Numb. 7. 9.* they following the Example of the *Philistines*, clapt it into a Cart, appointing *Uzzah* and *Abio*, the Sons of *Abinadab*, to drive the Cart. And in this manner setting forward, *David*, with all the House of *Israel*, followed it, playing before the Lord upon divers sorts of Musical Instruments, as Harps, Psalteries, Timbrels, Cornets and Cymbals.

Thus they went on, till they came to a Place called *Nachon's Threshing-floor*; where the Oxen stumbling, shook the Cart: which made *Uzzah* officiously put forth his Hand, and lay hold of the Ark, lest it should A. M.
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should fall. *Uzzab's* Intention, no doubt, was good in doing this. But it being contrary to the Law, which forbid all, but the Priests, even the Levites themselves, to touch the Holy Things, *Numb.* 4. 15. the Lord smote *Uzzab* for his *Rashness*; so that he died there by the Ark.

2 Sam. 2.
1 Chron.
13.

This *Breach* which the Lord had made upon poor *Uzzab*, struck *David* with great Fear. And mistaking it for a Sign that God was not pleased the Ark should come to him, he would not bring it into his City; but carried it aside into the House of *Obed-Edom* the *Gittite*, who was a *Levite*: where it continued *Three Months*, and the Lord blessed *Obed-Edom*, and all that he had.

2 Sam. 6.
1 Chron.
13.

In which time *David* perceiving their Error, which had provoked the Lord to Anger, and occasioned *Uzzab's* Death, and understanding that the Lord had blessed the House of *Obed-Edom* since the Ark had been with him: he took Heart now to remove it from thence; and bring it into his own City.

But that he might do it regularly (having first prepared a Place for the Ark of God, and pitched for it a Tent, and declared that none ought to carry the Ark of God, but the *Levites*) he called for *Zadok* and *Abiathar* the Priests, and for the chief of the *Levites*; and putting them in mind that they were the chief of the Fathers of the *Levites*, bid them *Sanctify themselves*, they and their Brethren, that they might bring up the Ark of the Lord God of *Israel*, unto the Place which he had prepared for it: For (said he) because ye did not so at the first, therefore the Lord our God made this Breach upon us; for that we sought him not after the due Order.

The Priests and *Levites*, thus admonished of their Duty, sanctified themselves; and the *Levites* took up the Ark of God with the Staves thereof, and bare it upon their Shoulders, as *Moses*, according to the Word of the Lord, had commanded. And the *Levites*, by *David's* Direction, appointed some of their Brethren to sing, and to play upon Instruments of Musick. And when all things were thus disposed in a due Order, King *David*, with the Elders of *Israel*, and the Captains over Thousands, set forward to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, from the House of *Obed-Edom* with Joy. And when they that did bear the Ark of the Lord had advanced Six Paces, he sacrificed Oxen and Fatlings, to wit, Seven Bullocks, and Seven Rams.

A. M. 2959. King *David* had dressed himself that Day, somewhat like the *Levites* and Singers, in a *Linen Ephod*, in which he danced before the Ark with all his might: And so brought up the Ark with shouting, and with the Sound of the Trumpet, and with several other sorts of Musical Instruments. And as they entered the City, *MICHAL*, the Daughter of *Saul*, looking through a Window, saw her Husband, King *David*, leaping and dancing before the Lord: And either not understanding, or not duly considering the Reason upon which he did it, she despised him in her Heart.

Now when they had brought in the Ark of the Lord, and had set it in its Place, in the midst of the Tabernacle that King *David* had pitched for it, he offered Burnt-offerings and Peace-offerings before the Lord. And then blessing the People in the Name of the Lord of Hosts, he distributed to every one of *Israel*, as well to the Women as the Men, a Cake (or Loaf) of Bread, and a good piece of Flesh, and a Flagon of Wine, and so dismissed them.

Then, having appointed certain *Levites* to Minister before the Ark of the Lord, to record what was done, and to thank and praise the Lord God of *Israel*; King *David* delivered unto *Asaph*, the chief of the Singers, a Psalm of Thanksgiving unto the Lord; which as delivered

ed in 1 Chron. 16. from v. 8. to 37. contains the 105th Psalm to ver. 16. with little variation; and then takes in the 96th Psalm.

2 Sam. 6.

Matters being thus disposed, as the People returned every one to his House: So David returned to his also, to bless his Household. And now out comes his Wife Michal to meet him, and (for want of a right Consideration, and sense of the Service he had been engaged in) thus in an Ironical upbraiding way received him; *How glorious (said she) was the King of Israel to day, who uncovered himself in the Sight of the Handmaids of his Servants, as one of the vain Fellows uncovereth himself.*

King David, not brooking this Reproach from his Wife, told her, *It was before the Lord he had so humbled himself, who had chosen him before her Father, and before all his House, and had appointed him Ruler over his People Israel.* Then he let her know, that for all her Taunting, he would play before the Lord, and would be yet more vile in this Sense, and debase himself more in his own Sight. And that tho' she despised him, those very Maid-servants whom she twitted him with, would honour him for it.

Michal's Offence in this matter was *Threefold*; against her Husband, against her King, and against God: For whose sake, and in honour of whom, her Royal Husband had done that, which she reproached him for. And for this Offence, her Punishment was, that she should be Childless all the rest of her Life, as for ought appears, she had been hitherto.

By this time David's House, which Hiram, 2 Sam. 5. 11. 1 Chron. 14. 1. 2 Sam. 7. had sent him Timber and Workmen to build, was finished, and he peaceably settled in it; the Lord having given him rest, for a while, from all his Enemies round about. Upon which Occasion he is thought to have composed the *Thirtieth* Psalm (which the Title thereof seems to import:) tho' some think that Psalm was made upon David's Return, after Absalom's Rebellion, and his purging his House from Absalom's Pollutions.

And now a Religious Concern possess his Mind, to build a Temple to the Lord. Wherefore having Nathan, the Prophet, one Day with him, he said to the Prophet, *See now, I dwell in an House of Cedar; but the Ark of God dwelleth within Curtains; which is a Periphrasis of the Tabernacle.*

Nathan readily understood him: And concluding so fair a Motion deserved Encouragement, replied, *Go, do all that is in thine Heart: For God is with thee.* But herein the good Prophet missed, judging from his own Apprehension of the Goodness of the Thing, without consulting God; who will have all his Work done in his own time and way, and by such only as he appoints thereunto.

The same Night therefore, the Word of the Lord came to Nathan the Prophet, saying, *Go, tell David my Servant, Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build me an House to dwell in: For I have not dwelt in an House, since the Day that I brought up Israel unto this Day; but have gone from Tent to Tent, and from one Tabernacle to another. In all the Places, wherein I have walked with all Israel, have I blamed any of the Judges of Israel (whom I commanded to feed my People) for not building me an House of Cedar? that thou shouldst presume to take such a Work upon thee, without my Order.*

Then charging the Prophet to remind David, from how Low a Condition the Lord had taken him, and to what an Height of Greatness he had raised him: He bid him tell David, that he would provide a Place of Rest, and Safety for his People in General; and in particular would establish David's Family. And that after his Death, he would set up

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2 Sam. 7.
1 Chron.
17.

one of his Sons upon his Throne; which Son should build an House for him: And he would establish the Kingdom unto him for ever; and would be a Father to him; and would take him for a Son, and would deal by him as a Son: So that if he should commit Iniquity, he would not take his Mercy wholly from him, to cut him off, as he had done *Saul*, but would *chastise him with the Rod of Men*, that is tenderly as Parents do their own Children.

This Message *Nathan* delivered to *David*. And, without doubt, then gave him the Reason also, why the Lord would not let him build an House; which was because he had made great Wars, and had shed much Blood; as himself afterwards told his Son *Solomon*, 1 Chron. 22. 8.

When *David* had received this Message, that he might shew his Subjection to the Will of God, and express his Thankfulness to the Lord, he went in and sat before the Lord. And debasing himself, that he might the more fully acknowledge the Goodness and Munificence of God unto him, in raising him to what he was, he returned most hearty Thanks to the Lord, for his manifold Favours conferred on him, and for his gracious Promise to settle his Son upon the Throne, and establish his Family in the Government; concluding with earnest Supplication, that the Blessing of the Lord may rest upon him, and his House for ever. Which read, more at large, in 2 Sam. 7. from ver. 18. to the end.

2 Sam. 8.
1 Chron.
18.

David now, sensible that he had mistaken his Work, in designing to build an House for God, applied himself to his proper Service, for which the Lord had raised him up; which was, to subdue the Enemies of *Israel*, and enlarge the Kingdom, which he was to leave to his peaceable Successor.

First therefore, falling upon the *Philistines*, he took from them the Royal City *Gath*, with the Towns belonging to it, and brought the *Philistines* into Subjection. This City *Gath* was called *Methegammah*, or the Bridle of Bondage, because it kept the Country in Bondage.

Then turning his Forces upon *Moab*, he reduced the *Moabites* to that Condition, that demolishing their Forts, he put to Death whom he pleased, and whom he pleased he saved alive; making them his Servants and Tributaries.

From thence going on to settle the Borders of the Country, at the River *Euphrates*, *Hadadezer* (called also *Hadarezer*, 1 Chron. 18. 3.) the Son of *Rehob*, King of *Zobah*, opposing him, he put *Hadadezer* to the worst; and took from him a Thousand Chariots, and Seven Thousand Horsemen, and Twenty Thousand Footmen; and reserving Horses for an Hundred Chariots only, he houghed (or cut the Hamstrings) of the rest of the Chariot Horses.

The *Syrians* of *Damascus*, hearing how hard it went with *Hadadezer*, came forth to succour him: And of them *David* slew Two and Twenty Thousand. This Loss so weakened them, that *David* put Garrisons in *Syria* of *Damascus*; and made the *Syrians* his Servants and Tributaries.

In his return from smiting the *Syrians*, the *Edomites* encountered him in a Place called the Valley of Salt; of whom he slew Eighteen Thousand Men, and thereby subdued *Edom* too; and putting Garrisons upon them, made the *Edomites* also his Servants. And upon this Occasion he is thought to have composed the Sixtieth Psalm.

From this Expedition he brought with him to *Jerusalem* good store of Gold and of Brass; for from *Hadadezer's* Soldiers he took Shields of Gold; and from *Berah* and *Berothai*, Cities of *Hadadezer*, he took a great deal of Brass.

Thus

Thus came *David* safe back, the Lord having preserved him whithersoever he went, and given him Renown for his great Achievements. And now reigning over all *Israel*, and being at rest from War, ^{2 Sam. 8. 1 Chron. 18.} he applied himself to execute Judgment, and Justice unto all his People, having, *Joab* (his Sister *Zeruiah's* Son) for his General; *Jehoshaphat* for Recorder; *Zadok* the Son of *Ahitub* (of the Stock of *Eleazer*, 1 Chr. 6. 4. and 8.) and *Abimelech* the Son of *Abiathar* of the Line of *Ithamar* for Priests; (Grandson to that *Abimelech* of *Nob*, whom *Saul* slew by the Hand of *Doeg*, 1 Sam. 22.) *Seraiah* for Secretary of State; and *Benajah*, the Son of *Jehojadah*, for Captain of the Guards; which consisted of *Cherethites* (who were of *Israel*) and *Pelethites* (who were of *Judah*;) veterane Soldiers all. And *David's* Sons, which were many (for he had Six born in *Hebron*; while he lived there, and Thirteen after he came to *Jerusalem*, besides the Sons of his Concubines, 1 Chron. 3. ver. 1. to 10.) were all Princes.

Hadadezer, it seems, had had Wars with *Toi* (called also *Tou*, 1 Chron. 18. 9.) King of *Hamath* (a City of *Canaan*, Numb. 13. 21. which fell to the Lot of *Naphthali*, Josh. 19. 32, 35.) Wherefore King *Toi*, hearing how *David* had beaten *Hadadezer*, sent his Son *Joram* to salute King *David*, and congratulate his good Success. *Joram* brought *David* a Present from his Father, of Vessels of Silver, Gold and Brass. All which with the Silver and Gold that he had taken, from all the Nations that he had subdued, King *David* did dedicate unto the Lord, for the Service of the Temple, that was to be built.

And now, settled in Peace and Prosperity, *David* remembered the former Kindness of his true Friend and Brother *Jonathan*. And enquiring, if there was any of *Saul's* Family, unto whom he might shew Kindness, for *Jonathan's* sake; *Ziba*, an old Servant of *Saul's*, was called, as one that could best give an account of his Master's Family. He acquainted *David*, that *Jonathan* had a Son yet living, named *Mephibosheth*; who was lame of his Feet. Whereupon *David*, understanding by *Ziba* where he was, sent and fetched him to him. And receiving him very courteously, bid him, Not fear; for he would certainly shew him Kindness for his Father *Jonathan's* sake, and would restore him all the Lands of his Grandfather *Saul*, and he should always eat at his Table. *Mephibosheth* thereupon bowing, and abasing himself, expressed the Sense he had of the King's Goodness, in taking notice of so mean a Person as he was. ^{2 Sam. 9.}

But *David* calling for *Ziba*, said to him, *I have given unto Mephibosheth, thy Master's Son, all that did appertain unto Saul, and to all his House. Thou, therefore, with thy Sons and thy Servants, shall till the Land for him; and thou shalt bring in the Fruits for thy Master Mephibosheth's Son* (for *Mephibosheth* had a young Son, named *Micha*.) *But as for Mephibosheth himself, he shall always eat at my Table.* *Ziba* undertaking the Charge, he and his Family, Fifteen Sons and Twenty Servants, were all Servants unto *Mephibosheth*: Who himself dwelling at *Jerusalem*, did eat continually at the King's Table, as one of the King's Sons.

Some time after this, *David* having heard that *Nabash*, King of *Ammon* was Dead, and that *Hanun*, his Son succeeded him; and gratefully remembering some Kindness, which it seems, *Nabash* had formerly shewed him (probably in the time of his Troubles under *Saul*, tho' I find not a particular mention of it in the Story) in return of Kindness, sent an Ambassy of Condolence to *Hanun*, to comfort him for the Death of his Father, and Congratulate his Accession to the Crown. ^{2 Sam. 10. 1 Chr. 19.}

When these Ambassadors were come to the *Ammonitish* Court, the Princes of *Ammon* perswaded their King, that *David* had not sent them in

in Honour to his Father, or to comfort him: But that, under that pretence, he had sent them *as Spies*, to search out the Strength of the City, that he might invade it.

2 Sam. 10.
1 Chr. 19.
A. M.
2966.

Hanun thereupon, seizing on the Ambassadors, shaved off one half of their Beards, and cut off their Garments in the middle to their Buttocks, and in that reproachful manner sent them away.

The Men thus basely exposed to Contempt, were so ashamed, they knew not how to return home. Wherefore *David*, being advertised of the Abuse, sent some to meet them, and bid them tarry at *Jericho*, until their Beards were grown again.

This violation of the Law of Nations, which gives Protection to Ambassadors, the *Ammonites* afterwards (but too late) considered it was not likely King *David* would put up. Wherefore expecting to be called to account for it, they sent and hired Men out of *Syria*, and other Neighbouring Parts, to the Number of Three and Thirty Thousand: And drawing out also their own Men, from their several Cities, they made all the Provision they could for their Defence. And *David*, not bearing to let such an Insolent Affront go unpunished, sent *Joab*, with all the Host of the mighty Men against them.

The *Ammonites*, expecting them, had ranged their Battel before their own City, at the Entrance of the Gate, having their Mercenary Forces, in a Body by themselves, in the Field. Which when *Joab* saw, he also divided his Army into Two Parts; and picking out all the choice Men of *Israel*, he himself led them up against the Mercenaries: Leaving the rest of his Forces with his Brother *Abishai*, for him to engage the *Ammonites* with. Then he and his Brother agreeing, to relieve each other, as need should require, *Joab* exhorted all his Men to be of good Courage, and to behave themselves valiantly for their People, and for the Cities of their God, and leave the Success to the Lord.

Joab, having thus encouraged his Men, made a fierce Charge upon the *Syrians*, and soon put them to flight. The fight of which, so discouraged the *Ammonites*, that they fled also, and got into the City. And thus with a Victory easily obtained, *Joab* returned with his Army to *Jerusalem*.

But long it was not ere he was fain to draw forth his Men again. For the *Syrians*, to recover their late Loss, raised a new Army; and *Hadarezer* sent and brought over the *Syrians*, that were beyond the River: Who all came to *Helam*, having *Shobach*, the Captain of *Hadarezer's* Host, at the Head of them.

As soon as *David* heard of this, he gathered all his Forces together, and passing over *Jordan*, marched himself with them to *Helam*. The *Syrians*, as soon as they saw him come, putting themselves in order, gave him Battel. In which *David* prevailing, the *Syrians* fled, having lost *Shobach* their General, and about Seven and Forty Thousand Men; whereof some were Horsemen, some Foot, and some that fought in Chariots. And when the petty Kings who were Tributaries to *Hadarezer*, saw that they were smitten before *Israel*, they made Peace with *Israel*, and served them: For having smarted so deeply for their Kindness to the *Ammonites*, they were afraid to help them any more.

But *David*, resolving to chastise the *Ammonites* yet more sharply, for their late Insolence, sent *Joab* forth the next Campaign, with a very great Army against them: Who having ravaged the Country, and destroyed the *Ammonites* where-ever he could come at them, laid Siege at length to their Royal City *Rabbah*, the Metropolis of the *Ammonites*.

But

But *David*, who had better have been at the Head of his Army, lay loitering now at home. And having taken his Ease upon his Bed, ^{2 Sam. 10.} one Afternoon (as the manner of great Persons, in those Hot Countries was) he arose in the Evening, and, to enjoy the Benefit of a cool Air, walked upon the Roof of his House, which (according to the Appointment in the Law, *Deut.* 22. 8.) was built flat, with Battlements round about the Roof, to prevent any ones falling off.

From thence his roving Eye happened to espy a very beautiful Woman, bathing and washing her self privately in her Garden, probably for Purification-sake, according to the Law, *Levit.* 15. And enquiring who she was, he was told her Name was *Bath-sheba* (called also *Bathshua*, ^{1 Chron. 2. 5.}) the Daughter of *Eliam*, (called there also, *Ammiel*) and Wife of *Uriah*: Who tho' an *Hittite* by Nation, was Profelyted to the Jewish Religion, and so marrying this *Israelitish* Woman, lived in *Jerusalem*; but was at that time with the Army, at the Siege of *Rabbah*. A. M. 2970.

David, taken with the Woman's Beauty, sent for her, and lay with ^{2 Sam. 11.} her; and she thereupon conceiving, sent him word that she was with Child. Now tho' *David* seemed not to be sensible of the Evil he had done: Yet he was, of the Shame that might come upon him by it. And therefore contriving how to hide it, he sent to *Joab* to send home *Uriah* the *Hittite* to him, as if he had some particular Business with him.

When *Uriah* was come to the King, after some general Enquiries, how *Joab* did? And how the People fared, and how the War proceeded? *David*, in seeming Kindness to *Uriah*, as one that might be weary after his Journey; bid him go down to his House, and wash his Feet (that is, rest and refresh himself:) And withal sent a Mess of Meat after him. But Providence so disposed, that *Uriah*, tho' he took his leave of the King; did not go down to his House. But falling in with the Yeomen of the Guard, slept at the Door of the King's House.

When *David* understood, next Morning, that *Uriah* had not gone home; he called him to him, and asked him what the Matter was, that he did not go home; seeing he came off from a Journey? *Uriah* bluntly and Soldier-like made him Answer, That in as much as the Ark, with *Israel* and *Judah*, abode in Tents, and his Lord General *Joab*, with the rest of the King's Servants, were encamped in the open Fields, he would not indulge himself so far, as to go to his House, to eat and to drink, and to lie with his Wife.

When *David* found he could not work upon him Sober, he resolved to try what he could do with him when he was Drunk. Wherefore keeping him another Day, he feasted him highly, and plied him so with strong Liquors, that he made him Drunk; hoping that then he would go home to his Wife. But neither Sober nor Drunk could *Uriah* be drawn to it. But at Evening, going forth from the King's Presence, he clapt himself down in the Guard-chamber, and there slept.

This put *David* upon a worse Course: For now he resolved *Uriah* should die; that, since he would not cover, he might not discover, nor revenge his Offence.

Wherefore dismissing *Uriah*, he sent by him a Letter to *Joab*; wherein he ordered *Joab* to set *Uriah* in the Fore-front of the Battel, and in the most dangerous Place: And then retire from him, that he might be smitten and die.

Accordingly *Joab*, observing what part of the City was best defended, assigned *Uriah* to a Place, where he knew there were Valiant Men. And when the Besieged made a Sally, they slew some of the Besiegers, and amongst them *Uriah*.

E e e e

Joab

Joab soon sent an Express to *David*, to give him an Account of the Success of the War; bidding him, if he found the King displeased that Things went no better, and that he should blame them for approaching so near, within Danger of the Wall, he should then tell him of *Uriah's* Death: Which (by the Letter he had received) he knew would please him; tho' perhaps he might not then know why.

2 Sam. 11.

The Messenger, thus instructed, went to *David*, and having given him an Account of the Battel; how daringly the Enemy sallied forth against them; how they beat them back to the very Entrance of the Gate; and how the Archers, shooting from the Wall, had slain some of the King's Servants; and among the rest *Uriah* the *Hittite*. *David*, having what he aimed at, sent back the Messenger; bidding him encourage *Joab* to go forward, and not to be troubled at the Loss: but consider, that the Sword makes no Difference; but devours one, as well as another. And that therefore he should make his Battel stronger, renew his Assaults with greater Vigour, and batter the City, until he had overthrown it.

Now when *Bath-sheba* heard, that her Husband *Uriah* was Dead, she made a Formal Mourning for him; and when that was over, *David* sent and fetcht her to his House, and she became his Wife, and bare him a Son: But the thing that *David* had done was Evil in the Sight of the Lord.

Mean while *Joab*, having straitned *Rabbah*; and by Assault taken that Part of the City, wherein the Springs and Conduits of Water were (whence he foresaw the City could not long hold out) he dispatcht a Messenger to *David*, to acquaint him what Progress he had made, and to entreat him to come with the rest of his Forces, and be present in Person at the Taking of the City, lest otherwise, if *Joab* should take it without him (or, in his Absence) it should thenceforth be called by *Joab's* Name.

2 Sam. 12.

David, thereupon gathering his People together, went to *Rabbah*, and fighting against it, took it. And besides the Spoil of the City, which he brought away in great Abundance, he took their King's Crown from off his Head, and had it set upon his own Head. Which Crown weighing a Talent of Gold, was worth Four Thousand and Five Hundred Pound Sterling (according to *Godwyn's Moses* and *Aaron*, l. 6. c. 10.) besides the precious Stones that were on it.

As for the People that were in *Rabbah*, they having exasperated him, by a double Offence; first in the Abuse put upon him, in the Persons of his Ambassadors, Chap. 1c. 4. which gave the Occasion for this War; and now, in holding out to the last Extremity, till the Place was taken by Storm; he gave them no Quarter. But putting them to the extreamest Torments, made them suffer under Saws and Axes of Iron, and under Harrows; and caused them to pass through the Brick-kiln. And having dealt in like manner with the Inhabitants of the other Cities of the *Ammonites*, he returned in Triumph, with his People, to *Jerusalem*.

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2970.

Now lay King *David* snug, and safe (as he thought) in the Arms of his beautiful *Bath-sheba* (whom he had brought to his Bed through the Dishonour and Blood of her Husband:) When God sent his Prophet *Nathan* to him, to rouse him out of his Adulterous Lethargy, and make him unwittingly his own Judge.

This the Prophet did, by proposing to him the following Parable, as demanding Justice of him, for an oppressed Poor Man, against a Rich Oppressor.

There

‘ There were (said *Nathan* to the King) Two Men in one City ;
 ‘ the one *Rich*, and the other *Poor*. The *Rich* Man had exceeding ^{2 Sam. 12.}
 ‘ many Flocks and Herds : But the *Poor* Man had nothing, save one
 ‘ little *Ewe-lamb*, which he had bought and brought up among his
 ‘ Children ; so that it did eat and drink as he eat and drank, and lay
 ‘ in his Bosom, and was unto him as a Daughter. And there coming
 ‘ a *Traveller* to visit the *Rich* Man ; he spared to take of his own Flock
 ‘ and of his own Herd, to dress for the *Stranger*, that was come to
 ‘ him ; but took the *Poor* Man’s Lamb, and dressed it, to entertain his
 ‘ Guest.

David’s Anger was greatly kindled against this *Rich* Man ; and presently passing Sentence on him, said to *Nathan*, *As the Lord liveth, the Man that hath done this thing, is worthy to die : And he shall also restore the Lamb Four-fold, because he did this thing, and had no Pity.*

Little thought *David* that he had sentenced himself, till the Prophet, turning quick upon him, said, *Thou art the Man*. That was an home-stroke. Yet to set it more home, and leave *David* without defence or Excuse, the Prophet went on, and by way of Aggravation added,

‘ Thus saith the Lord God of *Israel* ; I Anointed thee King over
 ‘ *Israel*, and I delivered thee out of the Hand of *Saul*, and I gave thee
 ‘ thy Master’s House, and thy Master’s Wives into thy Bosom (if thou
 ‘ hadst liked to have taken them.) I gave thee also the House of *Israel*
 ‘ and *Judah* ; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given
 ‘ thee such and such things. Wherefore then hast thou despised the
 ‘ Commandment of the Lord, to do Evil in his Sight ? For *thou hast*
 ‘ killed *Uriah* the *Hittite* with the Sword, and hast taken his Wife to
 ‘ be thy Wife :’ (For tho’ he was slain by the *Ammonites* : Yet inasmuch
 as thou didst contrive and appoint his Death, thou art guilty of his
 Blood.) ‘ And therefore the Sword shall not depart from thine House
 ‘ all thy Days. And because thou hast despised me, in taking the Wife of
 ‘ *Uriah* the *Hittite* to be thy Wife, thus saith the Lord, Behold,
 ‘ I will raise up Evil against thee out of thine own House ; and I
 ‘ will take thy Wives before thine Eyes, and give them unto thy Neigh-
 ‘ bour, and he shall lie with thy Wives in the Sight of the Sun : For
 ‘ tho’ thou didst it secretly ; I will do this thing before all *Israel*, and
 ‘ before the Sun in the most open manner.

Poor David prickt to the Heart, and Self-condemned, made no Excuse ; but simply said, *I have sinned against the Lord*. The Confession was short, but full. And he who knew the Integrity of his Heart, commissioned his Prophet thereupon to tell him, he would not take him strictly at his Word ; but would transfer the Sentence of Death (which he unwittingly had pronounced upon himself) from him unto the Child. *The Lord also* (said *Nathan* to *David*) *hath put away thy Sin : Thou shalt not die thy self for it. Yet because by this deed, thou hast given great Occasion to the Enemies of the Lord to Blaspheme, the Child that is born to thee* (of this *Adulterous Congress*) *shall surely die.*

The Prophet *Nathan*, having thus delivered his Message, departed home : And immediately the Lord struck the Child, so that it was very sick. *David* therefore besought God for the Child, and keeping a Fast, went in and lay all Night upon the Earth. So that, altho’ the Elders of his House went to him, and intreated him to arise and eat ; yet he would not.

On the *Seventh* Day (from the Child’s Birth, say *Tremellius* and *Junius*) the Child died : And *David*’s Servants, seeing how he grieved while the Child was alive, were afraid to tell him that it was dead, lest he should then afflict himself more. But when *David* by their whisper-
 ing

ing, suspected, and upon Enquiry, understood that the Child was dead, he arose from the Earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and having changed his Apparel, he went into the House of the Lord and worshipped. After which, returning to his own House, he did eat.

2 Sam. 12.

This made his Servants wonder, that he who fasted and wept for the Child while it was alive; should *rise* and *refresh* himself with Food, when it was *dead*. But *David* removed their Wonder by telling them, he fasted and wept, while the Child was alive, in hopes that God would be graciously pleased to spare the Child's Life. But now, said he, that the Child is dead, wherefore should I fast, seeing *I cannot bring him back again? I shall go to him: but he will not return to me.*

About this time it was, at least on this Occasion, that *David* composed the *One and fiftieth Psalm*: Which the Reader, before he proceeds further, may do well to turn to and read.

After this, *David* comforted *Bath-sheba* his Wife, and lying with her, she conceived, and bare him another Son. Whereupon the Lord sent *Nathan* the Prophet to him, to bid him call this Son *Solomon*; which Name signifies *Peaceable*: And was therefore given him, because the Lord had promised, not only that he himself should be a Man of Rest; but that he would give Peace and Quietness in his Days to *Israel*, 1 Chron. 22. 9. And because the Lord loved this Child, *David* called him also *Jedidiab*, that is, *Beloved of the Lord*.

2 Sam. 13.

Altho' *David* had many Sons, yet we read but of *one* Daughter that he had, whose Name was *Tamar*, Sister to *Abshalom*, the King's Third Son, whom he had by *Maacha*, the Daughter of *Talmai* King of *Geshur*.

And now, to make way for the bringing on that Judgment which God had so lately denounced against *David*, (viz. *That he would raise up Evil against him out of his own House*, 2 Sam. 12. 11.) *Amnon* the King's Eldest Son (which he had by his Wife *Abinoam*, the *Jezreelite's*) fell desperately in love with his Half-sister *Tamar*: Whole extraordinary Beauty so captivated the young Prince's Affection, that he pined away, through an hopeless Desire after her. For she, being a young Virgin, was so carefully kept within the King's House, (as the Manner of Breeding the Jewish Damsels was, those especially that were of the higher Rank,) that *Amnon*, tho' her Brother, knew not how to come at her.

The Trouble of *Amnon's* Mind, discovering it self in his Countenance, gave Occasion to *Jonadab*, his intimate Friend and Cousin German (as being the Son of *Shimeah*, *David's* Brother) to enquire of him what ailed him, that he (who being the King's Eldest Son, might be supposed to have whatever he desired) looked so thin, and wasted daily in his Flesh? *Amnon*, at *Jonadab's* Importunity, told him plainly, he was in love with *Tamar*, his Brother *Abshalom's* Sister.

Jonadab thereupon, being a very subtil Man, advised his Cousin *Amnon* to feign himself sick, and betake himself to his Bed; which would draw his Father to visit him: And then he should request his Father, to let his Sister *Tamar* come, and dress him something to eat, that he, seeing her do it, might eat it from her Hand.

Pursuant to this Advice, *Amnon* took his Bed, like a sick Man; which when the King heard of, he quickly came to see him: And *Amnon* entreating the King his Father, to let his Sister *Tamar* come, and make him a Couple of Cakes; the King, suspecting nothing of a Design, sent Word to *Tamar*, that she should go to her Brother *Amnon's* House, and dress for him what he would have to eat.

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Tamar very innocently went; and finding her Brother *Amnon* on his Bed, she made him such Cakes as he directed, and having baked them, brought them to him: But his Stomach did not yet serve him; neither would he eat while the Company was there. But when all were gone,

gone, so that he only and she were left alone together, he desired her to bring the Cakes to him: Which she doing, he took hold of her, and *2 Sam. 13.* said, *Come, lie with me, my Sister.*

The poor Princess, surprized at so strange a Proposition, and hoping to prevail with him by Persuasion; begg'd him to let her alone, and not attempt to *violate her Chastity*: Laying before him the *Guilt* he would bring upon himself (by so positive a Breach of the Law, *Levit. 18. 9.*) the Shame he would expose her to, and the *Contempt* he would subject himself to; by committing an Act, not only *very sinful*, but *extreamly foolish also*. Whenas, in all Probability, if he made Suit to her Father for her, he might have his Consent to marry her: Which Course she advised him to take; perhaps to *gain time*, and free her^self from the present Danger.

But *Amnon* was not to be answered with Words. This was not a *sudden Heat*; but a *Settled Desire*, and a *contrived Design* upon her. And therefore, having now gained his Opportunity, he was *deaf* to all her Reasons, Counsel and Entreaties: And *being stronger than she*, he forced her, and lay with her.

Having obtained his *Wicked End*, the answering of his *Lust*, *Amnon's* *hot Love* presently turned to *burning Hatred*. He hated *Tamar* so exceedingly, that *the Hatred wherewith he hated her, was greater than the Love wherewith he had loved her*. And in this hateful Fit, he churlishly bid her *Arise, and be gone*.

This troubled *Tamar* much, not only from the Sense of his *Unkindness*, but of the Danger of discovering (by this Means) the *Guilt* and *Shame* he had brought upon himself and her. Wherefore she told him, he had no Cause to deal thus roughly with her; and that the Evil of turning her thus out of Doors, would be worse (in the Consequences of it) than the other that he had done unto her. But he refusing to hear her, called his Servant, and bid him *Put her out of Doors*, and bolt the Door after her: Which accordingly the Servant did.

Poor *Tamar*, thus *abused* and basely dealt with, rent her Garment (which was of divers Colours, as, for Distinction sake, the unmarried Daughters of Kings, in that Age, used to wear:) And having put Ashes upon her Head, she laid her Hand also on her Head (in Token of great Sorrow) and went crying away to her Brother *Abshalom's* House.

As soon as *Abshalom* saw her in that Condition, suspecting what had befallen her, he asked her, If her Brother *Amnon* had been with her? And when she had told him how she had been dealt with, *he wisht* her to consider that *Amnon* was her Brother; against whom if she should complain, it was not likely she should obtain Justice, he being the King's Eldest Son; and that her Complaining would but spread her Reproach, and bring Infamy upon their whole Family; and therefore he advised her to keep her own Counsel, and not lay this Injury to Heart.

Tamar, taking her Brother *Abshalom's* Advice, remained in his House; but in a desolate Condition. As for *Abshalom*, he dissembling his Knowledge of the Matter, hid his *Resentment* of the *Injury*: and tho' he hated *Amnon*, for having forced his Sister; yet he took no notice of it to him.

But when King *David* heard of it, he was very wroth; yet we read not of any Punishment inflicted on *Amnon* for it: For *David* was an *indulgent Father*.

Full Two Years did *Abshalom* wait, for an Opportunity to be revenged on his Brother *Amnon*; which at length he thus contrived. He had a Day of Sheep-shearing at his Country-house, to which he invited all the King's Sons: And to colour the Matter invited the King himself first.

The King excused himself from going, upon the Account that he
 2 Sam. 13. would not put him to too great Charges; and tho' *Abfalom* pressed, he refused to go: Yet to let him see he was not offended with him, he gave him his Blessing before he parted with him. *Abfalom* then entreated him to let his Brother *Amnon* go with him; which *David* made some Hesitation of: But *Abfalom's* Importunity prevailed with him, to let not only *Amnon*, but all the rest of the King's Sons, go with him to his Sheep-shearing Feast.

Abfalom had given his Servants a strict Charge before hand, that when *Amnon's* Heart should be merry with Wine, and he should bid them finite him; they should then fall on couragiously, and kill him: And he would bear them out. The Servants, obsequious to their Master's Command, when he gave them the Watch-word, fell upon Prince *Amnon*, tho' Heir apparent to the Crown, and killed him. This put all the rest of the King's Sons in such a fright, not knowing where *Assassination* would end, that, not attempting to revenge their Brother's Death, they every one mounted his Mule, and fled towards their Father's Court.

But Report was speedier than they. So that ere they could reach the Court, Tidings were brought to *David*, That *Abfalom* had slain all the rest of the King's Sons; and had not left one of them alive.

At this astonishing News, the King tore his Garment, and lay on the Ground; and all his Servants stood by, with their Clothes rent. Which when *Jonadab* (*David's* Brother's Son, the same who had encouraged and counselled *Amnon* to take that Course, for the satisfying of his Lust, which had brought him to this untimely End) observed, he, to mitigate the King's Grief, desired him, not to think that all his Sons were slain: For he could assure him, that only *Amnon* was Dead; and that his Death had been determined by *Abfalom*, from the Day that he forced his Sister *Tamar*.

By that time *Jonadab* had done speaking, the rest of the King's Sons came in: And the King and they, with all the Court, wept and lamented full fore together.

Abfalom mean while made his Escape to *Talmai* King of *Geshur*, his Mother's Father: With whom he lived a voluntary Exile Three Years. In which time *David*, having mourned daily for his Son *Amnon*, and being now comforted concerning him, seeing he was Dead, began to hone after his Son *Abfalom* again.

This being observed by *Joab* (the King's General, and Cousin German to *Abfalom*) he bent his mind to contrive a way to obtain *Abfalom's* Pardon, and restore him to the Favour of the King his Father. Wherefore sending to *Tekoa* (a Town about Six Miles from *Jerusalem*, where the Prophet *Amos* afterwards lived, *Amos* 1. 1.) he fetched from thence a wise Woman; whom, having told her what she should say, he desired her to feign her self a Mourner, and putting on mourning Apparel, to go to the King, as one, that had a long time mourned for the Dead.

2 Sam. 14. The Woman, thus instructed, went to the King, and falling on her Face to the Ground, to do Obeysance to him, said, Help O King. The King thereupon asking her what she ailed? She answered, I am a Widow Woman; and my Husband is dead. And thy Handmaid had Two Sons, who strove together in the Field; and there being none to part them, the one smote the other, and slew him. And now (said she) the whole Family is risen against thine Handmaid; and would have me deliver up him that smote his Brother, that they may kill him, for the Life of his Brother whom he slew: And so destroying the Heir also, they would quench that little Spark of Life, which is left to our Family; and not leave to my Husband either Name or Remainder upon the Earth. The

The King, having heard her Complaint and Request, bid her *go home*; and he would *give Charge concerning her*. But this being *too general*^{2 Sam. 14.} an Answer, the Woman told him, *If he would protect her Son against the Avengers of Blood, the Iniquity* (of his having killed his Brother in the Fray) *should be upon her and her Father's House; and the King and his Throne should be guiltless*. Whereupon the King bid her, who-soever should molest her on that Occasion, bring him to him, and he would take such a Course with him, that he should not trouble her any more. This yet was not home enough to reach the Case; for she aimed at getting a *Promise* from him, that he would *pardon her Son*. Wherefore, to draw the King still further on, she again bespake him thus, *I pray thee, let the King remember the Lord thy God, that thou suffer not the Avengers of Blood to destroy any more, lest they destroy my Son*. Upon that the King, to give her assurance, said, *as the Lord liveth, there shall not one Hair of thy Son fall to the Earth*.

The Woman, now reckoning she had fast hold of the King by his Word, opened the Matter plainly to him; letting him know, that under the *Parable* of a Widow, mourning for the loss of one Son, and for the danger of losing the other, She had covertly represented to him the Grief of his People, for the Absence of his Son *Abshalom*; and their earnest Desire, that he might be recalled from Banishment.

When the King saw how *wily* he had been *over-reached*, he suspected *Joab* to have had an *hand* in the *Contrivance*; and asking the Woman, if it were not so? She told him, *It was*; and that *Joab* had instructed her what she should say. Whereupon the King calling for *Joab*, told him, he had granted *Abshalom's* Pardon; and bid him go bring him home again. *Joab*, returning humble Thanks to the King, for having so graciously granted his Request, went joyfully to the Court of King *Talmai* at *Geshur*; and from thence brought *Abshalom* to *Jerusalem*: But when he was come, the King gave order, that he should go to his own House; and not come to Court.

A. M.
2975.

This *Restraint* was *uneasie* to *Abshalom*. Wherefore when he had dwelt Two full Years in *Jerusalem*, and in all that time had not been admitted to the King's Presence, he sent for *Joab*; intending to have sent him, to intercede with the King on his behalf: But truly *Joab* would not come at him. When therefore he had sent for him a second time, and he had again refused to come; *Abshalom* remembering that *Joab* had a Field of Barley lying near to his, bid his Servants *go set it on Fire*: Which when they had done, *Joab* quickly came to *Abshalom*, to expostulate the Case with him, and to know what the Reason was, that his Servants had fired his Field.

Abshalom told him, he had sent for him, that he might send him to the King, to entreat that he might be brought to the King's Presence: And then, if the King thought him worthy of Death, let him kill him; for he had rather die, than live under this *Confinement*.

Joab then going to the King, and acquainting him how hardly *Abshalom* took it, to be brought from *Geshur* Two Years ago, and not to be suffered in so long time to see him, the King thereupon called for him: Who being come, and bowing himself on his Face to the Ground, before the King, was by him received with a Kiss; a Token of *Forgiveness* and Royal Favour.

Tho' *Abshalom* was *David's* Third Son, in the order of his Birth; *Amnon* by *Abinoam*, and *Chileab* by *Abigail*, being elder than he, 2 Sam. 3. 2, 3. yet now he seems to be the *Eldest*; *Amnon* being slain, and *Chileab* (supposed to be) dead before. This, together with the People's Affection to him, made him cast an *ambitious* Eye upon the Crown; which he thought himself worthy enough to wear.

For

For *Personage*, he was of such incomparable Shape and Beauty, that he had *no Match* in all *Israel*: For from Top to Toe, there was no *Blemish* to be found in him. And he had an Head of Hair of an almost incredible Bigness. For when he cut his Hair, (which he did once a Year, that it might not grow too heavy for him) we read he weighed it at two Hundred Shekels after the King's weight; which *Godwyn* computes to be Four Pound weight, and Two Ounces; *Moses* and *Aaron*, p. 298.

Being restored to the King's Favour, *Abfalom* had now the fairer Opportunities to *ingratiate* himself with the People; and he took care to lose no Occasion.

For first he put himself in an *higher Equipage* of State and Grandeur, than was usual. So that, whereas the King's Sons used to ride on *Mules* (as was observed before, Chap. 13. 29.) he provided for himself a *Chariot* and *Horses*, and *Fifty Men* to run before him; which were of the Nature of a *Life Guard*.

Then to oblige the People, he would get up betimes in the Morning, and standing in the way before the Palace-Gate, when any one, that had a Controversy with another, came to the King for Judgment, he would call him to him; and when the Man drew nigh to make Obedience to him, he would *take him in his Arms* and *kiss him*, and Discourse familiarly with him about his Business, and advise him to look well to it, and see that his Cause was rightly stated: But withal, to bring them out of Conceit with his Father's Government, he would lamentingly say, *But (alas!) there is no Man deputed of the King to hear thee*. Then to insinuate himself into their good Opinion, he would add, *Oh that I were made Judge in the Land; that every Man, which hath any Suit or Cause, might come unto me, and I would do him Justice!*

By such evil Arts as these, *Abfalom* stole the Hearts of the People, from the King his Father, and won their Affections to himself. And when he had thus strengthened himself, he went to the King his Father, and asked leave of him to go to *Hebron*, to pay a Vow which he had vowed to the Lord: For he pretended, that while he was at *Geshur* in Syria, he had vowed a Vow, *That if the Lord would bring him back in Safety to Jerusalem, he would then serve the Lord*, that is, offer a Peace-offering unto him; and the good King, not suspecting his Son of Treachery, gave him leave to go; bidding him, *Go in peace*.

This is said in the Text (*ver. 7.*) to be *After Forty Years*: But from whence to compute them, is not plain. They who would date these Forty Years from the Beginning of *David's* Reign, are too far out: For *David*, who reigned but Forty Years in all, reigned divers Years after this. *Tremellius* reads it *Before*, instead of *After* [*ante finem quadraginta annorum*; before the End of Forty Years:] But I doubt he makes too bold with the Text. More likely it is, that these Forty Years should commence from the time of *Abfalom's* Birth; and so denote his Age: And then the sense will be, that he was full *Forty Years* old, when he laid this Plot against his Father.

However it was for that, having obtained the King's leave, *Abfalom* took his Journey to *Hebron*. And with him went out of *Jerusalem* Two Hundred choice Men, whom he had singled out, and invited to his Feast, but had not acquainted them with his Design: So that they went in their Simplicity, not knowing any thing of it. But he sent Agents among all the Tribes, to sound the Minds of the Chief Men of *Israel*; and to direct all such as they could gain to his Faction, that when they should hear the Sound of the Trumpet, they should make Proclamation among the People, that *Abfalom* reigned in *Hebron*; in order to gather

gather the People thither to him. In particular, he sent for *Ahithophel* the *Gilonite*, King *David's* Counsellor, from his City *Giloh* (in the Tribe ^{2 Sam. 15.} of *Judah*) as one whom, for the Opinion they had of his Wisdom, many would be likely to follow; and indeed, *the Conspiracy grew strong*: For the People flocked in continually to *Absalom*.

While *Disloyal Absalom* was thus strengthening himself in his *Unnatural Rebellion*, some *Loyal Subject* or other, having got notice of it, came and acquainted King *David* with it. And to make him the more sensible of the Greatness of the Danger, he told him, The Heart (using the singular Number) of the Men of *Israel*, was gone after *Absalom*; as much as to say, The Men of *Israel* are unanimous, or of one Heart, in this Defection.

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This unexpected, and *surprizing* Message, struck *David* with so great Fear, that his *native Courage*, for the present, abating, he said to his Servants that were with him at *Jerusalem*, *Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom. Make speed to depart; lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring Evil upon us: And for our sake smite the City with the edge of the Sword.* They telling him, they were ready to obey his Commands; the King (leaving *Ten Women*, who were some of his *Concubines*, to keep the House) went forth, and all his Household after him; the *Cherethites*, and the *Peletites*, and the *Gittites* (being Six Hundred Men that had followed him from *Gath*) passing on before him.

Among these *David* took particular notice of *Ittai* the *Gittite* (whom some take to be Son to the King of *Gath*; and who, it seems, was but lately come to him:) and *David* said to him, *Wherefore goest thou also with us? Return to thy Place, and abide with the King* (so, seeing the People had set him up, he called the *Usurper*, his *Rebellious Son*) *For thou, said he, art a Stranger* (and therefore not in any Danger) and also an *Exile* (whence may be gathered, that he had fled to *David* for Protection, as *David* had formerly done to *Achish*) *In as much therefore* (said *David* to him) *as thou art but new come to us, why should I make thee wander about with us, we know not whither? Return thou, and take back thy Brethren: And Mercy and Truth be with thee.* But the noble *Gittite*, solemnly protesting to the King, that he would *run the same Adventure* with him, whether it were in *Life*, or in *Death*, the King bid him then pass over before him: Which he did, with his Men, and all the Little ones that were with him.

Thus passed they over the Brook *Kidron*, (called afterwards *Cedron*, *John* 18. 1. a Rivulet that ran between *Jerusalem* and the Mount of *Olives*) and took their Course towards the way of the Wilderness, both the King and the People weeping.

Then came *Zadok* the Priest, and all the *Levites* that were with him, bearing the *Ark* of the Covenant of God (which they intended to carry with them, as hoping for the greater Favour from God, having the *Ark* of his Covenant amongst them:) And they set it down until the People had done passing out of the City; *Abiathar*, the other Priest, standing by it. But *David* bid *Zadok* carry back the *Ark* of God into the City: *For* (said he) *If I shall find Favour in the Eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his Habitation* (to wit, the *Tabernacle* which I have raised for him.) But, *if he hath no delight in me; behold, here I am: Let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.*

But this was not all; *David* aimed at some further Advantage, by sending back the Priests to tarry at *Jerusalem*. For (said he to *Zadok*) *Art not thou a Seer?* (that is, one whose ministerial Function will protect thee from Violence, and render thee acceptable to *Absalom*) *Return there-*

fore into the City, thou and Abiathar, and your Two Sons with you (*Abi-
2 Sam. 15. maa: thy Son, and Jonathan his Son*) and there abide Peaceably: And I
will tarry in the Plain of the Wilderness, until there come word from you,
to certify me how things go.

Zadok therefore and Abiathar, carrying the Ark of God again to Jerusalem, tarried there. But David, setting forward again, went up by the Ascent of Mount-Olivet, weeping as he went; and having his Head covered, he went bare-foot: And all the People that were with him covered every Man his Head, in token of *extream Sorrow* (of which, see Instances, in Chap. 19. 4. and Ester 6. 12. and wept as they went up.

Being come to the Top of the Mount, David made a stop there, and worshipped God. And here some conceive he uttered what is contained in the *Third Psalm*; induced so to think, from the *Inscription* of that Psalm, which is, *When he fled from Absalom his Son*. But from some Expressions in it, especially in the 5, 6, and 7. Verses, it seems more likely to have been delivered *after Absalom's Defeat*. Unless we should rather suppose the *former Part* of it to have been uttered at this time, while David fled; and the *latter Part* at his Return, after the Victory: And so both Parts brought afterwards into one Psalm.

While David made this Halt on the Top of the Mount, Hushai the Archite, his old Friend and Counsellor, came to meet him, with his Coat rent, and Earth upon his Head: To shew he sympathized with his Master in his Sorrows, and to be a Partaker with him in his Sufferings.

David, willing to make the best Advantage of so useful a Man, told him, *He would be but a Burthen to him, if he should go along with him: But if he returned to the City, and insinuated himself into Absalom's Service and Secrets, he might then be of great Service to him, in defeating the Counsel of Abithophel*. And to encourage him thereunto, he let him know, that he should there have Zadok and Abiathar, the Priests, to assist him: To whom he might communicate whatsoever he could hear, or learn out of Absalom's House; and they might convey it to him by their Two Sons, Ahimaaz and Jonathan.

Hushai, thus instructed, and desirous to serve his King where he might do it to the best Advantage, returned to Jerusalem, to be there in readiness against Absalom should come thither.

But David, not daring to linger long, went on his way; and being
2 Sam. 16. got a little past the Top of the Mount, who should meet him but Ziba, the Servant of Mephibosheth, with a couple of saddled Asses, and upon them a Present, of Two Hundred Loaves of Bread, an Hundred Bunches of Raisins, with some Summer-Fruits, and a Bottle of Wine.

The King asking him what he meant by those things? He replied, *The Asses are for the King's Household to ride on, and the Bread and the Fruits for the young Men to eat, and the Wine for a Cordial for such as might happen to faint in the Wilderness*.

But where, said the King, is thy Master's Son? Oh, said false Ziba, He abides at Jerusalem: For he said, *Now shall the House of Israel restore me the Kingdom of my Father*. The too-credulous King, relying on the false Information of this treacherous Sycophant, past an over-hasty Sentence against innocent Mephibosheth, saying to Ziba, Behold, Thine are all that pertained to Mephibosheth. Whereupon fawning Ziba, bowing himself, besought the King to continue this Favour to him.

David still pressing forward, came in a while to Bahurim (a City in the Tribe of Benjamin) where he met with a very rude Reception. For from thence came forth a Man, of the Family of the House of Saul, whose Name was Shimei, the Son of Gera. Whether this Man had been a Personal Sufferer in the Fall of Saul's Family, or what else
had

had exasperated him against David, doth not appear: But a deep Offence he had, it seems, conceived against the King; and thought now he might safely vent his Malice without Danger. Wherefore he came forth, Cursing still as he came; and with his Cursing, thus he also railed at David. Come out, come out (said he) thou bloody Man, and thou Man of Belial. The Lord hath returned upon thee all the Blood of the House of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned: And the Lord hath delivered the Kingdom into the Hand of Absalom thy Son; and behold, thou art taken in thy Mischief, because thou art a bloody Man. 2 Sam. 16.
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Thus as he went along on the side of the Hill, over against David, he continued Railing and Cursing: Nor only so, but cast Dust, and threw Stones also at David, and at all his Servants, as they travelled along the way; tho' all the People, and the mighty Men of War, were on either hand of him.

This so provoked Abishai, David's Nephew, that he said to his Uncle, Why should this Dog curse my Lord the King? Let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his Head. But David, conscious to himself of his own Guilt in the Case of Uriah (Chap. 11.) and of God's Judgment denounced against him for it (Chap. 12. v. 11.) saw and acknowledged the just Hand of God in all this; and submitting to it said, in dislike of his Cousin Abishai's Offer, What have I to do with you, ye Sons of Zeruiah! So let him Curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David: Who then shall say, Wherefore hast thou done so? Alas, said he to Abishai, and to all his Servants, Ye see my Son, who came forth of my Bowels, seeketh my Life: How much more then may this Benjamite do what he hath done? Let him alone, and let him Curse, seeing the Lord hath bidden him. It may be the Lord will look on my Affliction, and will requite me good, for his Cursing.

While David was thus entertained at Bahurim; Absalom, and the Men of Israel that were with him, being come, with Abithophel, to Jerusalem: Hushai presented himself to him, with congratulatory Acclamations, crying out, God save the King! God save the King! Which Amphibolical Speech might be applied either way, to Absalom, or to David.

Absalom, well knowing Hushai to have been an intimate Friend, and Counsellor to his Father, played a little Ironically on him, saying, Is this thy Kindness to thy Friend? Why wentest thou not with thy Friend? Hushai replied, Nay: But whom the Lord and this People and all the Men of Israel choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide. In which still he left room for an Application to David, whom the Lord and all Israel had undoubtedly chosen: Which could not be truly said of Absalom. And altho', to take from Absalom all suspicion of him, and beget in him a Confidence of his Fidelity, he added, Whom should I serve? As I have served in thy Father's Presence, so will I be in thy Presence: Yet he might thereby mean (and no doubt did) to serve the Father still, by giving wrong Counsel to the Son, and by discovering the Counsels of the Son to the Father.

Hushai having thus wrought himself in among them; Absalom, that he might not lose time, said, Give Counsel among you, what we shall do. This, tho' spoken to them all, he directed more particularly to Abithophel; who had been a prime Counsellor to David, and was of that Repute in those Days, that his Counsel was regarded as if a Man had enquired at the Oracle of God.

Abithophel, well knowing the Danger he should be in, if a Reconciliation should be made between the Father and the Son, gave such Politick, but Wicked Counsel, as he concluded would hinder all Accommodation

dation between them. He advised *Absalom* therefore, in the first Place, *2 Sam. 16.* to take those Women, *his Father's Concubines*, which he had left to keep the House, and *openly lie with them* before the People: Alledging, that when all *Israel* should hear, how much, by that means, he had *incensed* his Father, despairing of *Pardon*, they would *stick close* to him. This Counsel suited *Absalom* well: And a Tent being spread on the Top of the House (which, as was noted before, was *flat-roofed*) *Absalom* went in unto his Father's Concubines, in the sight of all *Israel*.

2 Sam. 17. In the next place, *Ahithophel* advised a *speedy Pursuit* after *David*, before he should get into any *strong Place*, or have time to raise any *considerable Forces*. Let me now, said he unto *Absalom*, choose out *Twelve Thousand Men*; and I will arise and pursue after *David* this Night: And I will come upon him, while he is weary and weak-handed, and put him and his Men into such a Fright, that all the People that are with him shall Flee; and I will smite the King only, and bring back all the People to thee in peace.

This was the most pernicious Counsel that could have been given against *David*, and the most unnatural: Yet this pleased *graceless Absalom* well; and the Elders too of *Israel*, that were engaged in his Faction. But, as God would have it, *Absalom*, before he would put it in Action, bid them call *Hushai* also; that he might hear likewise what he would say.

When *Hushai* was come, *Absalom* said unto him, *Ahithophel* hath spoken after this manner: Shall we follow his Counsel? If not, speak thou. *Hushai*, that he might not seem to slight *Ahithophel*, replied, The Counsel that *Ahithophel* hath given (tho' in the general he be a very able Counsellor) is not good at this time. For (said *Hushai* to *Absalom*) thou knowest thy Father and his Men, that they be mighty Men, and they be chafed in their minds, as a Bear robbed of her Whelps in the Field: So that such a small Force as thou canst now send, will not be able to match them; and if by that means thou shouldst receive but a small Overthrow now at the first, it would quickly be bruited abroad, that there is a slaughter among the People that follow *Absalom*. And if once that possess the minds of the People, the most hardy, and valiant amongst thy Followers will be discouraged: For all *Israel* knoweth that thy Father is a mighty Man, and that they which be with him are valiant Men. And whereas *Ahithophel* proposes to seize thy Father in his Quarters by Night, and kill him only: He doth not consider that thy Father is a Man of War, and so well acquainted with the Policies of War, that he will not lodge with the People; and no doubt he is hid now in some Pit, or other private Place. Wherefore my Counsel is, That all *Israel* be generally gathered together, from one end of the Land to the other; and that having raised an Army like the Sands of the Sea for Multitude, thou march thy self, in thine own Person, at the Head of them, for their greater Encouragement. So shall we come upon him, as the Dew upon the Ground; and of him, and of all the Men that are with him, not leave one. And if he should be gotten into a City, we shall be enough to draw that City with Ropes into the River.

So well did *Hushai* deliver himself on this Occasion, that he won *Absalom*, and the chief Men of his Party, to his Opinion; inasmuch that they all agreed, and declared, that the Counsel of *Hushai* was better than the Counsel of *Ahithophel*. For indeed, the Lord had determined to defeat the Counsel of *Ahithophel*, which *Absalom* before thought good, and was most conducive to his Design; to the intent that the Lord might bring Evil upon *Absalom*.

But

But *Ahithophel*, who was not wont to meet with a *Repulse*, and could not brook, that the Counsel of another should be preferred to his, took it so hardly that his Counsel was not followed, that mounting his Ass, he gat him home; and having put his Household in order, Hanged himself. 2 Sam. 17.

Mean while, *Hushai*, having wisely diverted the present Storm from his Master *David*, took the first Opportunity to acquaint *Zadok* and *Abiathar*, the Priests, both what *Ahithophel* had counselled, and what Counsel himself had given; desiring them to send with all speed to *David*, and advise him, not to lodge that Night in the Plains of the Wilderness: But Speedily pass over *Jordan*; lest he should have been swallowed up, and all the People that were with him. For tho' *Hushai* had for the present put by the Pursuit, which *Ahithophel* had advised; yet not knowing how soon *Absalom's* Mind might alter, he was not willing the King should run that Hazard.

Zadok and *Abiathar* had posted their Two Sons, *Jonathan* and *Abimaaz*, at *En-rogel*, a Well or Fountain without *Jerusalem*. For they thought it not safe for them, who were to be the Messengers between *Hushai* and the King, to be within the City; lest they might be prevented from coming forth. To them therefore this Message being conveyed by a young Damsel, they speeded away with it to King *David*. But it unhappily happened, that a young Lad seeing them go off, went and told *Absalom*; who presently sent some after them, to Seize them, and bring them back.

But they, perceiving they were pursued, made such haste, that they reached *Bahurim*; and going to a Man's House there, that had a Well in his Court, they went down into it. And the Woman of the House, that the Well might not be seen, took a Coverlet, and spreading it over the Mouth of the Well, laid ground Corn thereon; as if it wanted siring. By that time this was done, came *Absalom's* Servants to the House, in quest of them; and asking the Woman where they were? She told them they were gone over the Brook of Water: Whereupon the Pursuers went on as she directed them: But when they had sought, and could not find them, they returned to *Jerusalem*.

As soon as they had notice that the coast was clear, *Jonathan* and *Abimaaz*, coming up out of the Well, went on to King *David*, and acquainted him, both what Counsel *Ahithophel* had given against him: And *Hushai's* Advice, that he should pass quickly over the River. Whereupon *David*, drawing out his Men, hastened away to *Jordan*; and by the Break of Day next Morning, he, and all the People that were with him, were got to the other side of the River.

Then marching on to *Mahanaim*, (a City in the Tribe of *Gad*, built in the Place where *Jacob* was met by the Angels of God, in his Return from his Father *Laban*, Gen. 32. 1, 2.) he there made a Stand. And while he staid there, *Shobi*, the Son of *Nahash* of *Rabbah*, of the Children of *Ammon*, who probably was a Tributary Prince to *David*, since his subduing the *Ammonites*, chap. 12. 26.) And *Machir* (the Son of *Ammiel*, of *Lo-debar*) Brother-in-law to King *David*, if (as is supposed) this *Ammiel* be the same, that was Father to *Bath-sheba*, *David's* Wife, 1 Chron. 3. 5.) And *Barzillai*, the *Gileadite* of *Rogelim*, brought in Provisions of several Sorts, to refresh the King and his People that were with him; who were Hungry and Thirsty, as well as Weary.

But it was not long before *Absalom*, having raised a great Army, passed over *Jordan*, in Pursuit of his Father; he and all the Men of *Israel* with him: And pitched in the Land of *Gilead*. And because *Joab* was gone along with King *David*; *Absalom* made *Amasa* Captain of his

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Host,

Host, instead of *Joab*, to whom he was Cousin-German. For *Amasa* was the Son of one *Ithra* (called also *Jether*, an *Ishmaelite* by Nation, 1 Chron. 2. 17. but an *Israelite* by Profession of Religion) who begat *Amasa* on *Abigail*, Sister of *Zeruiah*, *Joab's* Mother.

2 Sam. 18. When King *David* saw that his Son *Abshalom* was come over *Jordan* against him, and that there was no Remedy, but that it must come to a pitched Battel between them; he numbred the People that were with him: And setting Captains of Thousands, and of Hundreds, over them; he divided them into Three Battalions. Of these he gave to *Joab* the Command of one; to *Abishai*, *Joab's* Brother, the Command of another; and to *Ittai* the *Gittite* the Command of the Third; intending to go with them himself also.

But the People would not suffer that. For, said they, *If we be put to Flight, they will not care for us; neither will they regard it, if half of us be slain: For they had rather destroy thee; than Ten Thousand of us. Therefore it is better that thou slay, and relieve us out of the City.*

The King, willing at that time especially, to please his People, and perhaps not very earnest to engage in Person against his Son, answered, he would do what they thought best. Then standing by the Gate, as the People went out by Hundreds, and by Thousands; he gave a great Charge to his Three Generals, and all the Captains, in the Hearing of the People, that for his sake they should deal gently with the young Man *Abshalom*.

As soon as the Two Armies met, they joined Battel in a Wood, belonging to the Tribe of *Manasseh*; (called here *The Wood of Ephraim*, because, as some think, the *Ephraimites* drove their Cattel over *Jordan*, to feed them in this Wood. But others with more Probability, suppose it to be called *The Wood of Ephraim*, from the great Slaughter which *Jephthah* had formerly made of the *Ephraimites* in that Place, Judg. 12.) And tho' *Abshalom's* Army was, in all Likelihood, much Superior to *David's* in Number: Yet God, who raised this Storm against *David* for his Exercise, not for his Destruction, cast the Victory on *David's* Side; so that the People of *Israel*, who followed *Abshalom*, were slain before the Servants of *David*, to the Number of Twenty Thousand Men. And more might have fallen, had not *Abshalom* himself (for whose sake they engaged) been taken and slain. For he, to avoid the Soldiers of *David*, rode under the thick Boughs of an Oak; and his Head being caught in the Oak, he was so entangled, with his great Bush of Hair, amongst the Boughs, that his Mule, which he rode on, going away from under him, he was left hanging there between Heaven and Earth, not able to dis-entangle himself.

One that saw him in this Posture, went and told *Joab*, that he had seen *Abshalom* hanged in an Oak. *Joab* blaming him, that he had not killed him; told him, *If he had, he would have given him Ten Shekels of Silver, and a military Belt: Which was sometimes given in War, to such as achieved some honourable Exploit.*

The Soldier, excusing himself upon the King's Command, given in the Hearing of the whole Army, to spare *Abshalom*; told *Joab* he would not have put forth his Hand against the King's Son, tho' any one would have laid him a Thousand Shekels in his Hand.

R. M. 2981. *Joab*, not willing to lose time, soon brake off the Discourse; and taking Three Darts in his Hand, went to the Place where he understood *Abshalom* was, and thrust them through his Heart, while he was yet alive in the Oak. And to make sure work, Ten young Men, that bare *Joab's* Armour, compassing *Abshalom* about, smote him and slew him.

This

This done, *Joab* immediately, to prevent any further Effusion of Blood, sounded a Retreat. Whereupon the King's People, returning^{2 Sam. 18.} from the Pursuit, gave *Absalom's* Men Opportunity by Flight to escape home.

Then taking the Body of *Absalom*, they cast it into a great Pit, in the Wood; and laid a very great heap of Stones upon him.

Such was the End, such the Burial, such the Monument of this Ambitious Prince, and Rebellious Son. Who in his Life-time, considering that he had no Son living (tho' he had had Three, Chap. 14. 27.) to keep his Name in Remembrance, had reared up for himself a Pillar, in a Place called *The King's Dale*, not far from *Jerusalem*; and had called that Pillar after his own Name.

Abimaaz, Son of *Zadok* the Priest, was ambitious to have carried the good News of this Victory to King *David*; and therefore desired *Joab* to let him run, and bear the King Tidings, how that the Lord had avenged him of his Enemies. But *Joab* out of a kind Respect to the young Man, because he knew the News would not be welcome to *David*, put him by, with telling him, he should bear Tidings another time, when occasion might offer: But at that time he was not willing to employ him, because the King's Son was dead.

Then turning to *Cushi*, an *Ethiopian*, but Servant to *David*, he bid him, Go, tell the King what he had seen. Whereupon *Cushi*, howing himself to *Joab*, set forward.

Abimaaz, still desirous to go on the Errand, entreated *Joab* to let him run also, tho' it were after *Cushi*. Wherefore, said *Joab*, wouldst thou run, my Son, seeing thou hast no acceptable Tidings? Yet upon his pressing him the Third time, *Joab* gave *Abimaaz* Leave to go: Who, taking the Way by the Plain, out-ran *Cushi*, and got in before him.

Mean while *David* sat between the Two Gates of the City *Mabain*, in a doubtful Expectation of the Event of this Battel. And a Watchman being on the Roof, over the Gate upon the Wall, gave notice that he saw a Man coming, running alone. If he be alone, said the King, he brings Tidings.

As they drew near, the Watchman cried out that he saw another Man coming, running also alone. Him likewise the King concluded to be a Bringer of Tidings. And understanding by the Watchman, that the foremost of them did run like *Abimaaz*, the Son of *Zadok*, the King said, He is a good Man, and cometh with good Tidings.

As soon as *Abimaaz* came within Call, he said, aloud to the King, All is well. Then drawing nearer, he fell down to the Earth upon his Face before the King, and said, Blessed be the Lord thy God, which hath delivered up the Men that lifted up their Hand against my Lord the King. This was good News in general. But said the King, Is the young Man *Absalom* safe? *Abimaaz*, not willing to be the Messenger of that ill part of the News, told the King, that when *Joab* sent *Cushi* and him away, he saw a great Tumult, but he knew not what the particular Occasion was.

Presently upon this came *Cushi* in, crying, Tidings, my Lord the King: For the Lord hath avenged thee this Day of all them that rose up against thee. But said the King to him also, Is the young Man *Absalom* safe? The Enemies (answered *Cushi*) of my Lord the King, and all they that rise up to do thee Hurt, be as that young Man is.

That Word was enough; the King understood it. And being greatly moved for the Death of his Son, he went up to the Chamber over the Gate to weep. And as he went, he vented his Grief in this mournful Exclamation; O my Son *Absalom*, my Son, my Son *Absalom*, would God I had

had died for thee, O Absalom, my Son, my Son. Wherein it is probable, not only Paternal Affection moved: But the Sense of his Son's *Rebellious Sin*, and of the *Quick Judgment* of God upon him for it, raised his Passion to so high a pitch.

The King's thus mourning for Absalom, turned the Victory (or the Triumph for the Victory) into Mourning, unto all the People: For they, hearing how the King was grieved for his Son, gat them by stealth into the City, as People who are ashamed, steal away, when they flee in Battel.

This being observed by Joab, who was a Man of more Courage than Compassion, and thought this Carriage of the King's favoured too much of Pusillanimity, he went into the House to the King, (who having covered his Head, in token of Grief, was still crying out with a loud Voice, O my Son, Absalom, O Absalom, my Son, my Son) and with a Soldierly Boldness, and Freedom of Speech, told him, Thou hast shamed this Day the Faces of all thy Servants; who this Day, with the Hazard of their own Lives, have saved thy Life, and the Lives of thy Sons, and of thy Daughters, of thy Wives, and of thy Concubines; in that thou lovest thine Enemies, and hatest thy Friends: For, (by this Behaviour of thine) thou hast declared, That thou regardest neither Princes nor Servants. And I now perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this Day, it had pleased thee well. Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak comfortably unto thy Servants: For I swear by the Lord, if thou goest not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this Night; and that will be worse unto thee, than all the Evil that hath befallen thee, from thy Youth until now.

This bold Speech (more necessary perhaps, than decent) roused the King out of his bewailing Fit. And being a wise Prince, that knew how and when to comply with his Subjects, he arose and went down, and sat in the Gate, as his usual Manner had been; both to gratify his People with his Presence, and to hear and redress their Grievances. And a good Effect it had: For as soon as the People heard that the King was come forth in Publick again, they all halted to appear before him. For the Israelites that had sided with Absalom, had (upon the Desert) fled every Man to his Tent. But now, that they who had driven the King away, might shew their forwardness to bring him back, the People were at strife, throughout all the Tribes of Israel, saying one to another, The King hath often saved us out of the Hand of our Enemies, and particularly out of the Hand of the Philistines; and now he is fled out of the Land because of Absalom. But seeing Absalom, whom we Anointed over us, is dead in Battel, why therefore do ye not now speak a Word of bringing the King back?

This Return of Affection in the People of Israel towards their King, soon came to the King's Ear. Which as it could not choose but please him: so he was not a little troubled at the backwardness of the Men of Judah, from whom, as being his own Tribe and Family, he expected more regard. Wherefore to stir them up, he sent to Zadok and Abiathar the Priests, willing them to speak unto the Elders of Judah, as from him; and say unto them, Why are ye the last to bring the King back to his House? For the Speech of all Israel is come to the King about it, before ye speak a Word of it; altho' ye are my Brethren, my Bones, and my Flesh: What is the matter, that ye are so backward to bring home the King?

And to sweeten Amasa, who had been Absalom's General, he not only bid them put him in mind of his near Relation, to him, as being his Sister's Son, and so of his Bone, and of his Flesh: But authorized them also to give him Assurance from him, that he would make him Captain of his Host, in the room of Joab. For

For tho' David, concealed, as well as he could, his *Resentment*; yet Joab had much *lost his Favour*: For he had divers times not a little displeased him; as in the Murther of Abner formerly, in his killing Absalom now, contrary to the King's exprefs Command, and in his late overbold Reproof of the King. But this not being a time for the King to exprefs his Displeasure in, he carried himself very obligingly to all his People: By which means he bowed the Heart of all the Men of Judah, so that they unanimously petition'd him to return, with all his Servants; and came to meet him at Gilgal, to conduct him over Jordan.

With these came Shimei the Son of Gera, the Benjamite of Bahurim, who had so railed at, and cursed David as he fled. Who seeing the Tide now turned, Absalom dead, his Party routed, and King David returning in Peace and in Triumph, made haste with the foremost, to come down to meet the King, and to beg his Pardon, having a Thousand Men of Benjamin with him; perhaps to intercede for him.

As soon therefore as the King was come over Jordan, Shimei fell down before him, and said, *Let not my Lord impute Iniquity unto me; neither remember that which thy Servant did perversly, in the Day that my Lord the King went out of Jerusalem, that the King should take it to Heart: For thy Servant doth know that I have sinned.* Therefore behold, I am come down the first this Day of all the House of Joseph, to meet my Lord the King. Whereby [the House of Joseph] is understood the Three Tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin; which made up the Third Rank in their military Marchings: And in which Ephraim, Joseph's Son, had the first Place, Numb. 2. 18. to 25.

Abishai, Joab's Brother, and the King's Nephew, (who being present when this Man reviled the King, would fain have struck off his Head then, Chap. 16. 9.) was highly offended with Shimei; and fearing lest his Uncle's Lenity should be wrought upon to grant him his Pardon, upon this Submission, interposed, saying, *Shall not Shimei be put to Death for this, because he cursed the Lord's Anointed?*

But David, eying the Just Hand of God in what had befallen him, and resolving to re-ingratiate himself with his People by Acts of Clemency, gave Abishai this sharp rebuke; *What have I to do with you, ye Sons of Zeruiab, that ye should this Day be Adversaries unto me? Shall there any Man be put to Death this Day in Israel? For do not I know, that I am this Day King over Israel? Wherein he seemed to exprefs a Sense of the great Danger he was so lately in, of being Uking'd, and losing his Kingdom; and of the favour of both God and the People to him, in restoring him again to his Kingly Dignity. And therefore, it being a Day of Gladness and Thankfulness, it ought not to be stained with bloody Executions.* Then turning to Shimei, he said, and confirm'd it to him by an Oath, *Thou shalt not die.* Which Expression (considering what Direction David gave to his Son Solomon, concerning him, 1 Kings 2. 9. and his Execution thereupon, ver. 46.) had need be taken with some Limitation; and perhaps is best explained by David's own Words in the Place fore-quoted, where reciting the whole Passage of Shimei's Cursing him, and coming afterwards to meet him and beg his Pardon, ver. 8. he gives his own Words thus, viz. *I swear to him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to Death with the Sword.*

Among those that came to congratulate the King's Return, and attend him over Jordan, false Ziba was one; who fearing his Treachery to his Master Mephibosheth, would be discovered, came very officiously, with his Fifteen Sons and Twenty Servants, to wait on the King. and conduct him homewards.

As for *Mephibosheth*, he, poor Man, had been *so true a Mourner* for the King's Affliction, that he had neither *dressed his Feet* (tho' he was lame of them) nor *trimmed his Beard*, nor *washed his Clothes*, from the Day the King departed, until the Day he came again in Peace. And not being able for *Lameness*, to travel, he was fain to stay till the King came to *Jerusalem*: And then going to welcome him home, the King remembring what *Ziba* had told him of him, asked him, *Wherefore he went not with him?* To which he replied, *My Lord, O King, my Servant deceived me: For I ordered him to saddle me an Ass, that* (being unable to walk, because thy Servant is lame) *I might ride thereon, and go to the King, but he failed me.* And not only so, but hath also *slandered thy Servant* unto my Lord the King. But my Lord the King is as an *Angel of God* to discern my Innocency, (and my Servant's Treachery:) Do therefore what thou seest good. For all my Father's Household were but *Dead Men* (in Law) before my Lord the King: Yet didst thou set thy Servant among them that did eat at thine own Table. What Right therefore have I yet to cry any more unto the King?

As *David* had too credulously hearkened to *Ziba*, when he *falsely accused* his Master to him; and *over-hastily* condemning *Mephibosheth* unheard, gave all his Estate to his *dishonest Servant Ziba*: So now, tho' he admitted of *Mephibosheth's Excuse*, and seemed well satisfied of his Innocency; yet he did him right but *by halves*. *Why speakest thou* (said he) *any more of thy matters? I have said Thou and Ziba divide the Land.* Thus made he *Ziba Partner* with his Master; and rewarded the *false Servant* with half the Estate of his *innocent Master*: Who, for *falsely accusing* his Master, deserved rather *Punishment*. But good *Mephibosheth*, was so far from complaining or repining at this hard and *unequal Sentence*, that he cheerfully replied, *Yea, let him take all, since my Lord the King is come home again to his House in Peace.*

We heard before, that *Barzillai* the *Gileadite* was one of those that supplied the King with *Furniture*, and *Provisions* for himself and his Men, while he was at *Mahanaim*. And now that the King was to return, he came down himself from *Rogelim* (where he dwelt) tho' he was a very aged Man, to conduct the King over *Jordan*. And having brought him over the River, the King, in *grateful remembrance* of his *good Services*, invited him to go along with him to *Jerusalem*, and spend the Remainder of his Days with him there, that he might have opportunity to *requite his Kindness*.

Barzillai, excusing himself by his great Age, pleasantly answered the King, *How long can I expect to live, that I should go up with the King to Jerusalem? I am this Day Four-score Years old: And can I discern between Good and Evil? Can thy Servant taste what I eat, or what I drink? Can I hear any more the Voice of singing Men and of singing Women? Wherefore then should thy Servant be yet a Burden to my Lord the King? Thy Servant will go a little way over Jordan with the King; but why should the King recompence it me with such a Reward? Let thy Servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own City, and be buried in the Grave of my Father and my Mother: But behold thy Servant Chimham (my Son) let him go over with my Lord the King; and do to him what shall seem good unto thee.*

That he shall, replied the King, and I will do to him that which shall seem good unto thee: For whatsoever thou shalt require of me, that will I do for thee. Then kissing *Barzillai*, and blessing him, he dismissed him, to return to his own Place: But *Chimham* his Son, went along with the King; the People of *Judah*, and part of the People of *Israel*, conducting the King from *Jordan* to *Gilgal*.

And

And now arose an *Emulatory Quarrel* between the Men of *Israel* and the Men of *Judah*. For that Part of *Israel* that had followed *Ab-salom*, to redeem their Credit with the King, came to him at *Gilgal*, with a Complaint against the Men of *Judah*, saying, *Why have our Brethren, the Men of Judah, stole thee away, and have brought the King and his Household, and all his Men with him over Jordan?*

The Men of *Judah* answered them, *Because the King is near of kin to us. (David, indeed was so: But the King was no nearer of kin to them, than to all the rest of his Faithful Subjects) Wherefore then (said the Men of Judah) be ye angry for this matter? Have we eaten at all at the King's cost? Or hath he given us any Gift? As much as to say, we did it not for Self-interest, or to get Preferment at Court: But out of Affection and Duty.*

But, replied the Men of *Israel*, *we, being Ten Tribes of the Twelve, have Ten Parts in the King, so that we have more Right in David than ye. Why then did ye despise us, that our Advice should not be first had, in bringing back our King? Thus they grew hot one against the other: But the Words of the Men of Judah (as having the better Cause, in that they stuck to their King, when the others left him) were fiercer than the Words of the Men of Israel.*

This disgusted those Men of *Israel*, who were not well settled in their *Allegiance* before, and prepared them to receive any new *Impression*. Which being observed by a *Factionous Fellow*, one *Sheba*, the Son of *Bichri* a *Benjamite*, who happened to be there at that time; he took hold of the Advantage to raise a *Sedition*: And blowing a Trumpet, cried out, *We have no part in David; neither have we Inheritance in the Son of Jesse: Every Man to his Tents, O Israel.*

Upon this, those *Male-contents* of *Israel* deserted their King, and followed *Sheba*: But the Men of *Judah* clave unto their King, and conducted him from *Jordan* to *Jerusalem*. Whither being come, King *David* took the *Ten Women*, his Concubines (whom he had left to keep the House, *ch. 15. 16.* and whom *Ab-salom* had defiled, *ch. 16. 22.*) and putting them in ward, maintained them there, not using them any more as Concubines: But condemning them to perpetual *Widowhood*, kept them shut up to the Day of their Death.

2 Sam. 20.
A. M.
2966.

Then calling for his Nephew *Amasa* (whom he had made Captain of his Forces, *Chap. 19. 13.*) he commanded him to muster the Men of *Judah*, and bring them to him within Three Days. *Amasa* forthwith went about it: But tarrying longer than the time allowed him, *David*, who knew the Danger of Delay, said to *Abishai*, *Now will Sheba the Son of Bichri, do us more harm than did Ab-salom. Therefore take thou (said he to Abishai) thy Lord's Servants, and pursue after Sheba; lest he get him fenced Cities, and escape us.*

Abishai thereupon, taking to him his Brother *Joab's* Men, with all the *Cherethites* and the *Pelethites*, and all the mighty Men, led them forth out of *Jerusalem*, in pursuit of *Sheba*: And by that time they were come to the great Stone in *Gibeon*, *Amasa* met them; and led the Forces on.

Joab was with his Brother *Abishai* and the Men of War: And having his Sword girded upon his Soldier's Coat, as he went along it dropped out of the Scabbard, so that he had it naked in his Hand; which *Amasa*, not suspecting any Treachery or Hurt, did not heed. Coming up then to *Amasa*, whom for the loss of his Place he had a Pique at, he familiarly saluted him, asking him *how he did*: And taking him by the Beard to kiss him, thrust his Sword into him, so that his Bowels fell out upon the Ground; and with that one Stroke killed him. Then, leaving

one of his Servants to direct the People to come after him, he, with his Brother *Abishai*, followed the Pursuit after *Sheba*. But *Amasa* lying wallowing in his Blood in the midst of the High-way; the People, as they came on thither, stood still there; Struck with the Sight of so horrible a Spectacle. Which *Joab's* Servant observing, he removed the Corps out of the Highway into the Field, and covered it with a Cloth. Which done, the People went on after *Joab*, in pursuit of *Sheba*.

He, having run through the Tribes of *Israel*, had gathered together the *Berites*, who were of his own Tribe, the Tribe of *Benjamin*; and finding himself pursued, got into *Abel* (a City in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, called for distinction sake, *Abel-Beth-maachab*, or *The House of Maachab*, from *Maachab* the Wife of *Machir* the Father of *Gilead*, 1 Chron. 7. 15.)

Thither *Joab* and *Abishai*, with their Men pursued him; and there besieged him: And casting up a Bank against the City, they battered the Wall, to throw it down.

Mean while, a wise Woman, among the Besieged, calling to the Besiegers, from the Wall of the City, desired them to entreat *Joab* to come near, that she might speak to him: Which he doing, she handsomely put him in mind, That by a long Prescription of time, it had been a Custom drawn from the Law of God, Deut. 20. 10. to offer a Friendly Treaty of Peace, before they made War. But that, tho' she and her Fellow-Citizens were of *Israel*, and were Peaceable and Loyal Subjects to the King of *Israel*; yet he, forgetting this Custom and Law, sought to destroy them, without telling them why: And thereupon she asked him, Why he would swallow up the Inheritance of the Lord?

Joab, startled at this, answered, Far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy. No, no: The Matter is not so intended. But a Man of Mount *Ephraim*, *Sheba* the Son of *Bichri* by Name, hath taken up Arms against the King, even against *David*. Deliver him only, said *Joab*, and I will depart from the City.

Well, replied the Woman, If that be all, His Head shall be thrown to thee over the Wall. And forthwith calling the Governors of the City together, she, in her Wisdom, so managed the Matter with them, that they cut off the Head of *Sheba*, and cast it over the Wall to *Joab*. Whereupon *Joab* immediately raised his Siege; and Sounding a Retreat, returned to the King at *Jerusalem*.

And now that these Two Rebellions were quelled, and the State restored to Quietness again, the Court was new modelled, and the Chief Ministers and Officers were settled anew. For *Joab* having (tho' treacherously) removed his Competitor *Amasa*, obtained the Captain-Generalship over all the Host of *Israel*; *Benajah*, the Son of *Jehoiadab*, as Captain of the Guards, was over the *Cherethites* and the *Pelethites*; *Adoram* was Treasurer, *Jehoshaphat*, the Son of *Abilud*, was Recorder; *Sheva* was Secretary of State; *Zadok* and *Abiathar* were the Priests; and one *Ira*, a *Jarite*, was in Principal Favour with the King.

David had also a Royal Army, consisting of Three Hundred Thousand Men; who being divided, according to the Number of the Months in the Year, into Twelve Brigades or Bands, each consisting of Four and Twenty Thousand Men, besides Officers, were so disposed, that in times of Peace each Band, according to their settled Courses, was a Month upon Duty: And then was Relieved by the next, till every Band, taking its Turn, had served a Month in the Year. But in time of War, they were all in a Readiness to be drawn forth, as occasion might require.

Of their Order, and Course of Serving, with the Names of the Principal Commanders, Account is given in 1 Chron. 27. whither I refer the Reader. There also the Names of the Chief Rulers of the several Tribes, and of the King's Privy-Counsellors, and Officers over his Domestic Affairs, are particularly set down. As are likewise the Names of his Principal Captains, and most renowned Warriours; with brief Touches of some of their most Memorable Exploits, recorded in 2 Sam. 23. and 1 Chron. 11. whither also I direct the Reader, that I may spare the transcribing hither all the Instances there given. Yet one, being very extraordinary, for affectionate Loyalty, as well as adventurous Valour, on the one Hand; and Princely Piety, on the other, I willingly insert here: Which was thus.

While David had War with the Philistines, their Host encamping in the Valley of Rephaim, betwixt him and Beth-lehem, where also they had a Garrison, David, being then in an Hold at the Cave Adullam, longed for Water out of the Well, that was by the Gate of Beth-lehem, and said, Oh, that one would give me of that Water to drink! Which Wish of his, Three of his chief Captains hearing, they brake through the Host of the Philistines, and drawing Water out of the Well of Beth-lehem, brought it to David. But when David had it, he would not drink of it; but pouring it out unto the Lord, he said, Far be it from me, O Lord, that I should do this: Shall I drink the Blood of these Men, that have put their Lives in Jeopardy? For with the Hazard of their Lives they brought it, 2 Sam. 23. 15.

It was not long after this, before another, and that more general Calamity, beset Israel: For there arose a Famine, which held Three Years successively. The long Continuance of this Famine, made David take it for a Divine Judgment: And enquiring of the Lord for what Reason it was sent, the Lord answered, that it was for Saul, and for his Bloody House; because he slew the Gibeonites, Chap. 21. 1.

These Gibeonites were not of the Children of Israel; but of the Remnant of the Amorites: Yet Joshua and the Princes of Israel, beguiled by their False Pretences, had made a League with them, and confirmed it to them by Oath, whereby they had granted them their Lives. And altho' this League was fraudulently obtained: Yet being made, and solemnly sworn to before the Lord, it was not to be broken. And therefore Joshua, and the Princes of Israel, tho' they otherwise punished the Gibeonites for deceiving them, yet they kept the League inviolably, and would not suffer the Israelites to touch them. Neither was this League violated during the times of the Judges, that succeeded Joshua, for more than Three Hundred Years, till Saul's time; who, it seems, in his Zeal for the Children of Israel and Judah, slew the poor Gibeonites: Tho' when, where, how, or why this Slaughter was committed, is not particularly set down in Scripture, so far as I observe. Neither was this a general Slaughter, or total Extirpation of them: For David had recourse hereupon to the Gibeonites, to offer them Satisfaction; which shews they remained a People. But Saul by killing some of them had broken the League, and violated the Oath of God: For which Divine Vengeance was come upon Israel, in a general Calamity. For even Kingdoms sometimes suffer for the Sins which Kings, in their Kingly Capacity, commit. Thus Forty Years after Manasseh was dead, Judah suffered under Nebuchadnezzar, for the Sins of Manasseh their King, 2 Kings 24. 3.

Now when David understood that this Famine was sent, for the sake of those Gibeonites, whom Saul had slain, he asked the Chief of the Gibeonites, What he should do for them? And wherewith he

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should

should make the *Atonement*, that they might Bless the Inheritance of the Lord. For the Curse, even of a Gibeonite, for Injustice done; or, his Blessing for Justice executed, is of more Force than is commonly apprehended.

The Gibeonites answered the King, *We will have no Silver nor Gold of Saul, nor of his House; neither for us shalt thou kill any Man in Israel: But the Man that consumed us, and devised against us, that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the Coasts of Israel; let Seven Men of his Sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up before the Lord in Gibeah of Saul, whom the Lord did chuse.*

The King told them he would give them to them. And considering where to take them, he resolved however to spare *Mephibosheth*, the Grandson of *Saul*, because of the Lord's Oath that had passed between *Jonathan* and him; and the intire Affection, and high Friendship that had been between them. Wherefore having little Choice, he took *Armoni*, and another *Mephibosheth*, Two Sons of *Saul*, which he had by *Rizpah*, his Concubine; and with them the Five Sons of *Merab*, the Elder Daughter of *Saul* (for whom, in the Text, *Michal*, his younger Daughter, is set by Mistake) and delivered them into the Hands of the Gibeonites; who hanged them all Seven together before the Lord, in the Hill called *Gibeah of Saul*.

It was the Beginning of Barley-harvest when this Execution was made; and *Rizpah* (the Mother of Two of them) that she might preserve the Bodies from being preyed upon, by the Fowls in the Day-time, or the Beasts by Night, took Sackcloth, and spread it for her self upon the Rock, from the Beginning of the Harvest, until Water dropped upon them out of Heaven; which being a Token that God was appeased, the Bodies might then be taken down.

When *David* heard of the pious Care, which *Rizpah*, the Concubine of *Saul*, had shewed, for preserving the dead Bodies of *Saul's* Sons; he took the Bones of *Saul*, and of *Jonathan* his Son, from the Men of *Jabesh-gilead* (who had long before stollen them from the Street of *Beth-shan*, where the Philistines hanged them, after *Saul* was slain in *Gilboa*) and caused them, together with the Bones of those Seven who were now hanged, to be buried at *Zelah* in the Country of *Benjamin*, in the Sepulchre of *Kish* the Father of *Saul*. And after that, the Lord was intreated for the Land: And by sending Rain, which produced Plenty, and removed the Dearth, which want of the Rain had caused, declared that he had accepted the *Atonement* which had been made.

But Trials and Exercises still attended *David*; and scarce was he freed from pinching Famine, when he was again engaged in War: For the Philistines, who of all the Enemies *Israel* then had, seem to have been the most restless and unwearied, provoked him to Battel.

David therefore drawing forth his Forces, joined Battel with them; and the Fight continuing long, *David* waxed faint. Which being observed by *Ishbubenob*, (who was one of the Sons of the Giant, and Brother to *Goliath*, whom *David*, in Single-Combat, had slain; a Man of that extraordinary Strength, that the Head of his Spear weighed Three Hundred Shekels of Brass;) he, being girded with a New Sword, pressed upon *David* to have slain him. But *Abishai*, the Son of *Zeruiah*, *David's* Nephew, interposing, succoured *David*, and slew the Philistine.

David's Men observing this, were so sensible of the Danger the King had been in, that they resolved not to run the like Hazard again. And therefore in their affectionate Zeal for his Safety, they plainly told him, binding it with an Oath, that he should go no more to Battel with them. Left (as they express their Loyal Affection by an high Metaphor) he

he should *quench the Light of Israel*. Whereby they intended to set forth what Confusion and Disorder they should be left in, like Men in the ^{2 Sam. 21.} Dark, in case he should be slain in the Field.

The Loss of this *Giant* did not so discourage the *Philistines*, but that they prepared for Battel again, and at a Place called *Gob*, or *Gezer*; where *Sibbichai* the *Hushathite* (who was one of *David's* Mighty Men, Captain of the Eighth Division, or Band for the Eighth Month, having Four and Twenty Thousand Men under his Command, ^{1 Chron. 27. 11.}) flew *Saph*, or *Sippai*, who was of the Sons of the *Giant*: Whereby the *Philistines* were at that time beaten also, ^{1 Chron. 20. 4.}

But they quickly rallied, and offered Battel again in the same Place. And then *Elhanan* a *Beth-lehemite*, another of *David's* Worthies, flew *Labmi*, the Brother of *Goliath* the *Gittite*, a Man of that exceeding Stature and Strength, that the Staff of his Spear also was (as his Brother's had been) like a Weaver's Beam.

Yet were not the *Philistines* so subdued, but that a while after they joined Battel again in *Gath*, having in their Army another of the *Giant's* Sons, who was not only a Man of great Stature, but was monstrous in his Limbs or Members: For he had on each Hand Six Fingers, and on each Foot Six Toes. But when he defied *Israel*, a Nephew of *David's*, whose Name was *Jonathan* (the Son of *Shimea*, *David's* Brother) flew him.

Thus fell these Four mighty Men, for Stature and Strength, who were born to the *Giant* in *Gath*: By whose Fall the *Philistines* probably were so weakened, or dismayed; that we hear of no more Action from them, during the Remainder of *David's* Reign.

And now, upon this Deliverance, not only of his Person from the late Danger he had been in; but of his Kingdom also from all Hostilities, both Civil and Foreign: *David*, in a Thankful Sense of the Goodness and Favour of God to him, in freeing him at length from all his Enemies, as he had done from *Saul* long before, spake (or Sang) unto the Lord that *Excellent Song*, composed of *Acknowledgments*, *Thanksgivings* and *Praises*, which is delivered in ^{2 Sam. 22.} and makes the 18th Psalm.

But *David's* Troubles were not yet over: For the Anger of the Lord ^{2 Sam. 24.} was again kindled against *Israel*, through *David's* means; and that ^{1 Chr. 21.} brought great Trouble to *David*. The Occasion was this.

Tho' *David* was grown old, and the Lord had given him Rest from all his Enemies: Yet the restless Enemy to Goodness, and to all good Men, stirred up in *David* a vain Curiosity, to know the Strength of his Kingdom; and in order thereunto moved and provoked him to number ^{A. M. 2987.} *Israel*. Hereupon *David* commanded, the General of his Forces, and the other Captains of his Host, to go through all the Tribes of *Israel*, from *Dan* even to *Beer-sheba* (that is, from one end of the Land to the other) and number the People; giving no other Reason for it, but that *he might know* the Number of them.

The Snare that *David* did not see, *Joab* did; and fain would have diverted the King from it. To which End, in a more modest and humble Strain, than was usual with him, he expostulated the Matter with the King thus.

The Lord thy God make the People, how many soever they be, an Hundred times so many more as they be; and that the Eyes of my Lord the King may see it. But since they are all (whether few or many) my Lord the King's Servants; Why doth my Lord require this thing? Why will he be a Cause of Trespass to *Israel*?

But

But notwithstanding all that *Joab*, and the rest of the Captains of the Host urged against it; the King was resolutely bent to have it done: And his Word prevailed against them all. About it therefore they went, tho' unwillingly: And having spent Nine Months and Twenty Days in Traversing the Land, from end to end, and side to side; they returned to *Jerusalem*, and *Joab* gave up the Sum of the Number of the People to the King.

But the Account is differently related. For in 2 *Sam.* 24. 9. the Sum given in, is Eight Hundred Thousand Valiant Men, that drew the Sword, in *Israel*; and Five Hundred Thousand in *Judah*. Whereas in 1 *Chron.* 21. 5. The Sum given in for *Israel*, is Eleven Hundred Thousand; and for *Judah*, but Four Hundred Threescore and Ten Thousand. So that this latter Account has Three Hundred Thousand more than the former, in *Israel*; and Thirty Thousand less than the former in *Judah*. But it may be considered, that *Joab* through a Dislike of the Work, gave over numbring, and left it unfinished; 1 *Chron.* 21. 6. and *Chap.* 27. 24. Which might occasion the different Accounts; brought in by some more fully: By others more sparingly.

No sooner was the Account given in, but *David* was sensible of his Error. He needed not now, as in the Case of *Uriah* and *Bath-sheba* formerly, be convicted by a Parable; he was convicted in himself. His Heart smote him, and made him break forth into an Acknowledgment of his Sin, and a Deprecation of it. *I have sinned greatly* (said he to the Lord) *in that I have done: And now I beseech thee, O Lord, take away the Iniquity of thy Servant; for I have done very foolishly.*

The Nature of *David's* Sin is not particularly set down, that I observe. But, besides his *Presumption*, in desiring to know, that he might *glory* in the Number and Strength of his People; and his doing it in an *Arbitrary way*, without any Reason or Cause, but meerly to gratifie his own Will; he is supposed by some to have Transgressed, in not raising the Lord's Tribute upon the People, when they were numbred, according to an express Law, *Exod.* 30. 12, 13. whereby it was provided, That when the People were numbred, they should, every Man from Twenty Years old and above, pay Half a Sanctuary-Shekel, (which is valued of our Money *Fifteen Pence*) as an *Atonement* and *Ransom* for their Lives, that there might no *Plague* come among them, Which Money was to be appropriated to the Service of the *Tabernacle* of the Congregation. And the Sum raised thereby, upon the first numbring of the People in the Wilderness, amounted to an Hundred Talents, and a Thousand Seven Hundred Threescore and Fifteen Shekels of the Sanctuary. Which (reckoning a Talent at Three Hundred Seventy Five Pounds, and a Shekel at Two Shillings Six Pence) comes to (if I have not mistaken in the Reduction) Thirty Seven Thousand, Seven Hundred Twenty one Pound, Seventeen Shillings and Six Pence. Yet others, I know, are of Opinion, That this *Capitation*, or *Poll-Tax*, was not to be raised upon every Numbring of the People.

But wherein soever the Weight of *David's* Sin in this Case lay; the Punishment was left to his own Choice. For in the Morning, by that time *David* was up, the Lord sent his Prophet *Gad*, *David's* Seer, to say unto him, *Thus saith the Lord, I offer thee Three Things; Choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee* (or bring it upon thee,) that is, either *Three Years Famine*, (so we read in 1 *Chron.* 21. 12. tho' in 2 *Sam.* 24. 13. it is *Seven Years*: Which some think to be *Three Years* more, added to the *Three Years Famine* last past, which with the *Fourth Year*, then running, would make *Seven*; which yet would be but *Three Years* of new Punishment.) Or *Three Months* to be destroyed before thy

Foes

Foes, while the Sword of thine Enemies overtaketh thee. Or else Three Days the Sword of the Lord, even the Pestilence in the Land; and the Angel of the Lord destroying throughout all the Coasts of Israel. Now, therefore, said the Prophet, Advise and Consider well what Answer I shall return to him that sent me. 2 Sam. 24.
1 Chr. 21.

Here the Gradation is by Years, Months and Days. Three Years Famine. Three Months for the Sword to devour. Three Days for the Pestilence to rage. Which shews, that Three Days of Pestilence is equivalent to Three Months of Havock by the Sword; and Three Months of War, or Destruction by the Sword, equal to Three Years Famine.

Tho' to Chuse was a Favour; yet the Choice was hard: Which made David say to the Prophet, I am in a great Streight. Yet having duly weighed all, he concluded, Let us fall into the Hand of the Lord (for his Mercies are great and many:) But let us not fall into the Hand of Man. By which he chose the Pestilence; which is here called the Sword of the Lord: And wherein the Hand of God is more immediately seen, than in War or Famine; wherein Man may have a Hand, especially in War.

The Choice thus made, the Lord accordingly sent a Pestilence upon Israel, which lasted Three Days; and within that time there died of the People Seventy Thousand Men.

Thus God suited the Punishment to the Sin (tho' not to the Person Sinning) lessening the Number of them, in whose Number he would have gloried: Yet transferring the immediate Punishment from the King to the People. Which may stand for another Instance, That the Subjects sometimes smart for the Sins which their Rulers, in their Ruling Capacity, commit.

By this time the Destroying Angel, having scattered the Plague throughout the Land, was come to Jerusalem, and had stretched forth his devouring Sword over the City. Which David, and the Elders of Israel who were with him, cloathed in Sackcloth, perceiving, they fell upon their Faces; and David, humbly addressing himself unto God, said, Is it not I that commanded the People to be numbred? Even I it is that have sinned, and done Evil indeed. But as for these Sheep; what have they done? Let thy Hand, I pray thee, O Lord my God, be on me, and on my Father's House, but not on thy People, that they should be plagued.

Now did the Lord repent him of the Evil, and said to the Angel that destroyed the People, It is enough: Stay now thine Hand. The Angel, when he received this Countermmand, stood between the Earth and the Heaven, by the Threshing-floor of Araunah (called also Ornan, the Jebusite; who, with his Four Sons, was Threshing Wheat, and seeing the Angel, hid themselves.) And forthwith the Angel dispatcht the Seer Gad to David, bidding him say unto him, Go up, and set up an Altar to the Lord, in the Threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

David made no delay. And as he was going, Araunah seeing the King and his Servants coming on towards him, went out to meet them; and bowing himself before the King, with his Face towards the Ground, asked, Wherefore is my Lord the King come to his Servant? To buy the Threshing-floor of thee, answered David, to build an Altar therein to the Lord, that the Plague may be stayed from the People. Take it to thee, said Araunah, and let my Lord the King do as he pleases with it: Lo, I give thee (added he) the Oxen also for Burnt-Offerings, and the Threshing Instruments for Wood, and the Wheat for the Meat-offering; I give it all. Nay, replied David, but I will verily buy it for the full Price: For I will not take that which is thine, for the Lord;

nor offer Burnt-offerings unto the Lord my God of that which cost me
 2 Sam. 24. *nothing.* Then coming to a Price, David gave *Araunah* for the Threshing-
 1 Chr. 21. floor and the Oxen, *Fifty Shekels of Silver.* So we read it in *Samuel*;
 which if Shekels of the Sanctuary, makes Six Pounds and Five Shil-
 lings: If common Shekels, but half that Money. But in *Chronicles*
 it is *Six Hundred Shekels of Gold by weight*; which, valuing each
 Shekel at Fifteen Shillings, comes to Four Hundred and Fifty Pounds.
 The Difference is great. But to help it, some think the Fifty Shekels
 of Silver, in *Samuel*, were for the Oxen only, the Price of the Land be-
 ing there omitted: And the Six Hundred Shekels of Gold, in *Chroni-
 cles*, for Land and Oxen altogether. But the Price seems *extream* on
 the one Hand, or the other.

If any unacquainted with the Husbandry of those Times, should enquire
 what Relation the Oxen had to the *Threshing-floor*, that they were at
 it, and were sold with it; it may not be amiss, for the Information of
 such, to observe here, That the *Antients* used Oxen for the *Treading* or
Threshing out their Grain; and sometimes, with the Oxen drew a *Wheel*
 over the Corn upon the Floor, whereby the Grain was beaten out.
 The Use of the Oxen in this Work appears in the *Mosaick Law*, which
 commanded, that they *should not muzzle the Ox, when he trod*, (or as
 in the Margin, *threshed*) *out the Corn*, Deut. 25. 4. which the Apostle
 repeats to another Purpose, 1 Cor. 9. 9. And that they used to get
 out their Corn, by *turning a Wheel about upon it*, the Prophet *Isaiah*
 teaches, Isa. 28. 27, 28. where he says, the Fitches are not threshed with
 a threshing Instrument; neither is the *Cart-wheel* turned about upon the
 Cummin: Implying that the *Cart-wheel was turned about upon the
 Grain.* Which Custom is thought by some to be alluded to, in Prov.
 20. 26. where the Wise King is said to scatter the Wicked by *bringing
 the Wheel over them.* The *Threshing-Instruments*, also, mention'd here
 by *Araunah*, comprehending the *Yokes* of the Oxen, and the *Wheels*,
 with such other *Impliments* as were necessary to fasten the Oxen to the
 Wheels, would afford much more Wood for the Burnt-offerings, than
 many Flails could do. But to proceed;

The Place thus purchased, *David* built an Altar there, and offered
 Burnt-offerings and Peace-offerings, and called upon the Lord. And the
 Lord answered him from Heaven, by Fire upon the Altar of Burnt-
 offering: And so was the Lord appeased for the Land; and the Plague
 was stay'd from *Israel*.

The End of the Second Book of SAMUEL.

T H E
First B O O K
O F T H E
K I N G S;

Including the first Twenty Chapters

O F T H E
Second B O O K
O F T H E
C H R O N I C L E S:

And containing an History of 118 Years: From the Beginning of the Reign of King Solomon, over both Israel and Judah; to the end of the Reigns of Ahab, King of Israel, and of Jehoshaphat King of Judah.

KING David was now grown old: So that, altho' they covered him with Clothes, yet he *wanted heat*. Wherefore some of his Servants proposed, That a young Virgin should be provided to wait on the King, and be his *Bedfellow*, that she might cherish him, and keep him warm. This being approved of, they sought thro' all the Coasts of *Israel*, and at length pitched upon a fair Damsel, whose Name was *Abishag*, called a *Shunamite* from the Place where she lived, which was *Shunem* (a Town in the Tribe of *Issachar*, *Josh.* 19. 18.) and having brought her to the King, she ministered to him, and cherished him But he did not carnally know her.

*1 Kings 1.
A. M.
2989.*

The

The King's Eldest Son, now living, was *Adonijah*, a very goodly Man, *1 Kings 1.* and one whom the King his Father had been so *indulgent* to, that he had not displeased him at any time; so much as by saying, in any Case, why hast thou done so? He, an *Ambitious Prince*, considering now his Father's *Age* and *Weakness*, and thinking he lived *too long*, to keep him from the Throne, exalted himself, and said, *I will be King*. And having (as his Brother *Abalom* had done) prepared himself Chariots and Horsemen, and Fifty Men to run before him; he conferred with *Joab*, his Father's General, and with *Abiathar* the Priest: Who joining with him, and encouraging him, he made a great Feast; to which he invited all his Brethren, the King's Sons, (except *Solomon*) and the Men of *Judah*, the King's Servants (except *Nathan* the Prophet, and *Benaiah*, Captain of the King's Guards, and the mighty Men, whom he did not call to his Feast.) The Design was, That when they had feasted well, and made the People merry, they should proclaim *Adonijah* King.

Of this Conspiracy the Prophet *Nathan* having got knowledge, hastened to Queen *Bath-sheba*, the Mother of *Solomon*, and said to her, *Hast thou not heard that Adonijah, the Son of Haggith doth reign, and David our Lord knows nothing of it? Now therefore come, I pray thee, said he, and let me give thee Counsel; that thou mayst save thine own Life, and the Life of thy Son Solomon.*

She listening to him, Go get thee, said he, unto King David, and say unto him, didst not thou, my Lord, O King, swear unto thine Handmaid, saying, *Assuredly Solomon thy Son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my Throne? Why then doth Adonijah reign? And (added he) while thou art yet talking with the King, I also will come in after thee, and confirm thy Words.*

Bath-sheba thus instructed, went into the King's Chamber, and bowing did Obeisance to the King: Who asked her, *What she would have? Whereupon she said, My Lord, Thou swarest by the Lord thy God unto thine Handmaid, That Solomon thy Son should assuredly reign after me, and sit upon my Throne. And yet now Adonijah reigneth; and thou, my Lord the King, knowest it not. And he hath slain Oxen, and fat Cattel and Sheep in abundance; and hath invited all the rest of the King's Sons, with Abiathar the Priest, and Joab the Captain of the Host: But Solomon thy Servant hath he not called. And thou, my Lord O King, the Eyes of all Israel are upon thee, expecting thou shouldst tell them, who shall sit on the Throne of my Lord the King after him. Otherwise it may come to pass, that when my Lord the King shall sleep with his Fathers, I and my Son Solomon shall be accounted Offenders.*

While she yet talked with the King, *Nathan* the Prophet came in also (upon which, it seems, *Bath-sheba* withdrew; for when they had spoken, she was called in again, *ver. 28.*) And when they had told the King that the Prophet was there, he was brought before him, having bowed himself, with his Face towards the Ground, he said, *My Lord, O King, Hast thou said Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my Throne? For he is gone down this Day, and hath slain Oxen, and Fat Cattel, and Sheep in abundance; and hath called all the King's Sons, and the Captains of the Host, and Abiathar the Priest: And behold they eat and drink before him, and say, God save King Adonijah. But me, even me thy Servant, (said he not sticking to put himself, and others also, before the Prince) and Zadok the Priest, and Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada, and thy Servant Solomon, hath he not called. Is this thing done by my Lord the King, and thou hast not shewed unto thy Servant, who should sit on the Throne of my Lord the King after him?*

Upon

Upon this, King David said, *Call me Bath-sheba*: Who coming in and standing before the King, he sware, and said unto her; *As the Lord¹ Kings¹ liveth, who hath redeemed my Soul out of all Distress, even as I sware unto thee formerly, by the Lord God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy Son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my Throne in my stead: Even so will I certainly do this Day.*

At that Word *Bath-sheba* bowing, with her Face toward the Earth, did Reverence to the King, and said, Let my Lord King David live for ever.

Then said the King, Call me *Zadok* the Priest, and *Nathan* the Prophet, and *Benaiah* the Son of *Jehoida*. (For *Nathan*, it seems, withdrew when *Bath-sheba* came in the *Second* time, as she had done before, when he came in the *First* time.) These coming all three before the King, he said to them, *Take with you my Servants, and cause Solomon my Son to ride upon mine own Mule, and bring him down to Gibon* (a Brook that ran between the City of David, and the other part of *Jerusalem*;) and let *Zadok* the Priest, and *Nathan* the Prophet anoint him there King over *Israel*: And blow ye with the Trumpet, and say, God save King Solomon. Then shall ye come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my Throne: For he shall be King in my stead; and I have appointed him to be Ruler over *Israel* and over *Judah*. Amen, said *Benaiah*, and the Lord God of my Lord the King say so too. And, added he, as the Lord hath been with my Lord the King: Even so be he with Solomon; and make his Throne greater than the Throne of my Lord King David.

Down forthwith went *Zadok* the Priest, and *Nathan* the Prophet, and Captain *Benaiah*, with the King's Guards, the *Cherethites* and *Peletites*; and causing *Solomon* to ride upon the King his Father's Mule, brought him to *Gibon*: Where *Zadok* the Priest, having taken with him an *Horn of Oil* out of the Tabernacle, Anointed *Solomon*; which done, they blew the Trumpet, and all the People cried out, God save King Solomon. Then came the People up after him, piping with Pipes, and rejoicing with great Joy: So that the Earth rang with the Sound of them.

By this time *Adonijah* and his Guests, who were at *En-rogel*, on the other side of the Brook *Gibon*, had just finished their Feast. And his Party being ready to proclaim him King, they were surprized, and startled with the Sound of the Trumpet, and the Shouts of the People that attended on *Solomon*. And while *Joab* was musing what that noise meant, as if the City was in an Uproar; in slept *Jonathan*, the Son of *Abiathar* the Priest, amongst them; whom when *Adonijah* saw, he said Come in, for thou art a valiant Man, and (usually) bringest good Tidings.

But when *Adonijah* had heard the Tidings which *Jonathan* now brought, he did not think them good. For *Jonathan* told him, Verily our Lord King David hath made *Solomon* King. For the King hath sent with him *Zadok* the Priest, and *Nathan* the Prophet, and *Benaiah* the Son of *Jehoiada*, with the *Cherethites* and the *Peletites* his Guards; and they have caused him to ride upon the King's Mule: And *Zadok* the Priest, and *Nathan* the Prophet have Anointed him King in *Gibon*, and they are come up from thence rejoicing, so that the City rang again; and this is the Noise which ye have heard. And now, added he, *Solomon* sits on the Throne of the Kingdom: And the King's Servants, coming to bless our Lord the King, said, God make the Name of *Solomon* better than thy Name, and his Throne greater than thy Throne. Whereupon the King, bowing himself in Reverence to God, as he lay upon his Bed, said, Blessed be the Lord God of *Israel*, who hath

M m m m

given

given me a *Successor*, to sit on my Throne this Day, even while I my
 1 Kings 1. Self am alive to see it.

At this Relation, all the Guests that were with *Adonijah* were so
fear'd, that they rose up in a *Fright*, and fled every Man to shift for
 himself.

As for *Adonijah* himself, he ran, for fear of *Solomon*, and caught hold
 of the *Horns* of the *Altar*, as a Place of *Refuge* for Offenders, till he
 could have Assurance from *Solomon*, that he would not put him to
 Death. Which when *Solomon* heard of, he said, *If he will shew himself*
a worthy Man, there shall not an Hair of his Head fall to the Earth (he
 shall suffer nothing :) *But if hereafter Wickedness shall be found in him*
 (if he shall again attempt any thing against me) *he shall die*. So King
Solomon sending this kind Message to him, they brought *Adonijah* from
 the Altar to the King: And he bowing himself to King *Solomon*, in Token
 of both *Thankfulness* and *Subjection*, and to acknowledge his *Sovereign-*
ty over him, was dismissed by the King, to go to his House without Re-
 straint.

After this, *David* finding his natural Strength more and more to de-
 cay, assembled all the Princes of *Israel*, the Chief of the Tribes, and
 the Captains of the Companies that attended the King by Course, and
 the Captains over the Thousands, and over the Hundreds, and the
 Stewards that were over all the Substance and Possession of the King
 and his Sons, with the Officers, and all the mighty and valiant Men, un-
 to *Jerusalem*. Where being all met together, attending the King's
 Pleasure, King *David*, tho' weak, stood up upon his Feet, and thus
 kindly bespake them.

1 Chron.
28.

' Hear me, my Brethren and my People. I had in mine Heart to
 ' build an House of Rest for the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord,
 ' and for the Footstool of our God; and I had made ready for the Build-
 ' ing: But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build an House for my
 ' Name. Howbeit the Lord God of *Israel* chose me, before all the
 ' House of my Father, to be King over *Israel*. For he hath chosen *Ju-*
 ' *dah* to be the Ruler; and of the House of *Judah*, the House of my
 ' Father; and among the Sons of my Father, he liked me, to make me
 ' King over all *Israel*. And of all my Sons (for the Lord hath given me
 ' many Sons) he hath chosen *Solomon* my Son, to sit upon the Throne of
 ' the Kingdom of the Lord over *Israel*. And he said unto me, *Solomon*
 ' thy Son, he shall build my House and my Courts: For I have chosen
 ' him to be my Son, and I will be his Father. Moreover, I will esta-
 ' blish his Kingdom for ever. if he be constant to do my Command-
 ' ments and my Judgments, as at this Day. Now therefore (said *Da-*
 ' *vid* to them that were present) in the sight of all *Israel*, the Con-
 ' gregation of the Lord, and in the Audience of our God, seek for and
 ' keep all the Commandments of the Lord your God; that ye may
 ' possess this good Land, and leave it for an Inheritance to your Chil-
 ' dren after you for ever.

Then turning his Speech to his Son. And thou, *Solomon* my Son, said
 he, ' Know thou the God of thy Father; and serve him with a perfect
 ' Heart, and with a willing Mind: For the Lord searcheth all Hearts,
 ' and understandeth all the Imaginations of the Thoughts. *If thou*
 ' *seek him, he will be found of thee: But if thou forsake him, he will*
 ' *cast thee off for ever*. Take heed now therefore; for the Lord hath
 ' chosen thee to build an House for the Sanctuary: Be strong and do it.

David then gave to *Solomon* his Son the Pattern of the Porch, and of
 the Houses thereof, and of the Treasuries thereof, and of the Upper-
 Chambers thereof, and of the Inner-Parlours thereof, and of the Place
 of

of the Mercy Seat. Even the Pattern of all that he had *by the Spirit*, viz. of the Courts of the House of the Lord, and of all the Chambers round about; of the Treasuries of the House of the Lord, and of the Treasuries of the Dedicated Things: Also for the Courses of the Priests, and of the *Levites*, and for all the Work of the Service of the House of the Lord; and for all the Vessels of Service in the House of the Lord.

Then he delivered unto him by Weight the *Gold* and the *Silver* which he had long been gathering together, and had laid up for this Service; with particular Direction how, and in what Proportion to apply it, to the several uses and parts of the Work, according to the Understanding God had given him of the Pattern of the House, and of the Vessels and Utensils thereof.

And then again, exhorting him to be strong, and of good Courage to do it; he bid him *Not fear, nor be dismayed: For the Lord God* (said he) *even my God, will be with thee; and he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the Work, for the Service of the House of the Lord.*

And further to encourage him, he told him, The Courses of the Priests and *Levites* should be with him for all the Service of the House of God; and he should have with him every willing skilful Man, for all manner of Workmanship and Service: And that the Princes, and all the People would be at his Command.

Which that they might the more readily be, he applied himself again to them, and to the whole Congregation, wishing them, to consider, that *Solomon* his Son, whom alone the Lord had chosen to that Work, was yet but *young* and *tender*; and the Work was *great*: For the Palace, which he was to build, was *not for Man*; but *for the Lord God*.

Then recounting to them how he had, at the publick Charge, with all his might prepared Materials for the House of his God; as *Gold*, *Silver*, *Brass*, *Iron*, *Wood*, *Precious Stones* of divers Sorts and Colours, and *Marble* in abundance, for their several and proper Services (of which he had given his Son *Solomon* a particular Account:) And that, out of his *high Affection* to the House of his God, he had (over and above all those) given of *his own proper Goods*, Three Thousand Talents of the *Gold* of *Ophir* (which accounting each Talent at Four Thousand and Five Hundred Pounds, amounts, if I miscast them not, to Thirteen Millions and Five Hundred Thousand Pounds) and Seven Thousand Talents of refined *Silver*. (Which reckoning each Talent at Three Hundred Seventy Five Pounds, makes Two Millions Six Hundred Twenty and Five Thousand Pounds:) He invited the Congregation to a voluntary Contribution, by saying, *And who then is willing to consecrate his Service this Day unto the Lord?*

Upon this *Invitation*, the chief of the Fathers and Princes of the Tribes of *Israel*, and the Captains of Thousands and of Hundreds, with the Rulers over the King's Work, offered *willingly*; and gave for the Service of the House of God, Of *Gold* Five Thousand Talents and Ten Thousand Drams, (the Five Thousand Talents coming to Two and Twenty Millions and Five Hundred Thousand Pounds; and the Ten Thousand Drams, at Fifteen Shillings a piece, coming to Seven Thousand and Five Hundred Pounds: In all, Two and Twenty Millions, Five Hundred and Seven Thousand, and Five Hundred Pounds in *Gold*.) And of *Silver* they gave Ten Thousand Talents (making at Three Hundred Seventy five Pounds each, Three Millions Seven Hundred and Fifty Thousand Pounds in *Silver*.) Besides Eighteen Thousand Talents of
Brass

1 Kings 2. Brals, and an Hundred Thousand Talents of Iron (which probably went by Weight, whatever the Gold and Silver did.) As many also as had precious Stones, gave them to the Treasure of the House of the Lord. And when the Offerings were made, the People rejoyced, because they had offered willingly, and with a perfect Heart. And King David also rejoycing with great Joy, brake forth into this Song of Praises and Prayer unto the Lord, before all the Congregation.

‘ Blessed be thou, Lord God of *Israel*, our Father, for ever and ever.
 ‘ Thine, O Lord, is the *Greatness*, and the *Power*, and the *Glory*, and
 ‘ the *Victory*, and the *Majesty*: For all that is in the Heaven, and in
 ‘ the Earth is thine. Thine is the *Kingdom*, O Lord, and thou art ex-
 ‘ alted, as *Head* above all. Both *Riches* and *Honour* come of thee, and
 ‘ thou reignest over all: For in thine Hand is *Power* and *Might*; and
 ‘ in thine Hand it is to make great, and to give *Strength* unto all. Now
 ‘ therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious Name.

‘ But who am I? And what is my People, that we should be enabled
 ‘ to offer so willingly after this manner? For all *Things* come of thee,
 ‘ and of thine own have we given thee. For we are *Strangers* before
 ‘ thee, and *Sojourners*, as all our Fathers were: Our Days on the Earth
 ‘ are (short and transient) as a *Shadow*; and there is no (certainty of)
 ‘ abiding. O Lord our God, all this Store which we have prepared,
 ‘ to build thee an House for thy Holy Name, cometh from thine Hand,
 ‘ and is all thine own. I know also, my God, that thou triest the
 ‘ Heart; and hast Pleasure in Uprightness. As for me, in the Upright-
 ‘ ness of my Heart I have willingly offered all these Things: And now
 ‘ have I seen with Joy thy People, which are present here, to offer
 ‘ willingly unto thee. O Lord God of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Israel*, our
 ‘ Fathers, keep thy People ever in this Mind, and establish their Heart
 ‘ unto thee. And give unto *Solomon* my Son a perfect Heart, that he
 ‘ may keep thy Commandments, thy Testimonies and thy Statutes, and
 ‘ do thy Will in building the Palace for which I have made Provision.

Having thus poured forth his Soul, in Praises and Prayer to God; King David said to all the Congregation, *Now bless the Lord your God*. Whereupon all the Congregation blessed the Lord God of their Fathers, and bowing their Heads, worshipped the Lord; and did reverence to the King. And on the next Day they offered Sacrifices and Burnt-Offerings unto the Lord; even a Thousand Bullocks, a Thousand Rams, and a Thousand Lambs, with their Drink-Offerings: And Sacrifices in abundance for all *Israel*; and did eat and drink before the Lord on that Day with great gladness.

And in the midst of this *Festivity*, they proclaimed *Solomon* King the Second time, anointing him unto the Lord, to be the chief Governor: And *Zadok* to be the chief Priest. Then sat *Solomon* on the Throne of the Lord, as King in the stead of *David* his Father, (or rather as *Co-Rex* with his Father, during the little Remainder of his Father's Life: For it does not appear that *David* resigned his Scepter, until he resigned his last Breath.) And *Solomon* reigned prosperously; all *Israel* obeying him. And all the Princes, and the mighty Men; yea, and all the Sons also of King *David*, submitting themselves unto *Solomon*, as their King.

Now when King *David* felt Death more nearly approaching, he called his Son *Solomon* to him, and giving him his last Charge, said, ‘ I go
 ‘ the way of all the Earth (which is a *Periphrasis* of *Dying*:) be thou
 ‘ strong therefore, and shew thy self a Man. And keep the Charge
 ‘ of the Lord thy God, to walk in his Ways, and to keep his Statutes,
 ‘ his Commandments, his Judgments and his Testimonies, as it is
 written

‘ written in the Law of *Moses*; that thou mayest prosper in all that
 ‘ thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thy self: That the Lord *1 Kings 2.*
 ‘ may continue his Word, which he spake concerning me, when he
 ‘ said, *If thy Children take heed to their Way, to walk before me in Truth,*
 ‘ *with all their Heart, and with all their Soul, there shall not fail thee a*
 ‘ *Man on the Throne of Israel.*

Then coming to speak of particular Persons and Things, relating to his Government, ‘ Thou knowest, said he, what *Joab* the Son of *Zeruiah*, did to me (referring probably to his killing *Abshalom*, contrary to his express Command, and his speaking so boldly to him afterwards:) And what he did to the Two Captains of the Hosts (of *Israel*, and of *Judah*) *Abner* and *Amasa*, both whom he slew, and shed the Blood of War in Peace, putting the Blood of War upon his Belt and in his Shoes (that is, doing it as openly and daringly, as if it had been done in War.) Do thou therefore according to thy Wisdom; and let not his Hoary Head go down to the Grave in Peace. But shew Kindness unto the Sons of *Barzillai* the *Gileadite*, and let them be of those that eat at thy Table: For they furnished my Table, when I fled because of *Abshalom* thy Brother.

‘ And behold (said he further) thou hast with thee *Shimei*, the Son of *Gera*, a *Benjamite* of *Baburim*, who cursed me with a grievous Curse when I went to *Mahanaim*: But he came down to meet me at *Jordan* (in my Return,) and I sware to him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to Death with the Sword. Now therefore hold him not guiltless: For thou art a Wise Man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do to him. But his Hoary Head bring thou down to the Grave with Blood.

If any think this Direction of *David*’s to his Son *Solomon*, concerning *Shimei*, was too severe; inasmuch as he had before, upon his Submission, granted him his Life: Such may do well to consider, that *Shimei*’s Offence was *Two-fold*; against God, as well as against *David*. God’s Law was express, *Exod. 22. 28. Thou shalt not Curse the Ruler of thy People.* Now *David* was not only the Ruler of the People, but God’s Anointed; a King of his own immediate Choice: Whom he had raised up to fight his Battels, and to execute his Judgment upon *Saul* and his House, for his Disobedience and Rebellion. And therefore *Shimei*, in railing at, and cursing *David*, calling him a bloody Man, and that with particular Respect to the Blood of *Saul*’s House, did Blaspheme God, who had taken the Kingdom from *Saul*, and given it to *David*. And altho’ God was pleased to give *David* leave, to shew his own Condescension and Clemency, in forgiving *Shimei*’s personal Offence against him: Yet he would not so pass by the Sin against himself. And therefore he both stirred up *David*, to commit the Punishment to his Son and Successor *Solomon*: And gave *Solomon* Wisdom so to adjust the Punishment, that *Shimei* might yet have escaped the severest part of it, if he had not brought it upon himself, by a new Transgression, in breaking his Oath afterwards, as we shall see anon.

When *David* had ended his Advice to his Son, he put up a Prayer to God for him; and brake forth withal into a kind of *Prophetick Declaration* of the flourishing Greatness, Prosperity, Peace and Justice of *Solomon*’s Reign: Which in some Respects was Typical of the Reign and Kingdom of *Christ*. This takes up the Place of the 72d Psalm: And the last Words thereof speak this to be the last Prayer or Psalm that *David* made. And being now ready to yield up the Ghost, he breathed out his last Words to this Effect.

David, the Son of Jesse, saith, even the Man who was raised up on high, the Anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet Psalmist (or Singer) of Israel saith, The Spirit of the Lord spake by (or in) me, and his Word was in my Tongue. The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spake thus to me, *He that ruleth over Men should be Just; ruling in the Fear of God.* And such an one will be as the Light of the Morning, when the Sun riseth; even as a Morning without Clouds: As the tender Grass springing out of the Earth, by the clearing (of the Sun) after Rain. And altho' my House be not so with God (not as a Morning without Clouds, but has had both Clouds and Storms;) yet he hath made me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure: For in this is all my Safety, and this is the Sum of my Desire, altho' he make it not to grow. But the Sons of Belial shall be all of them as Thorns thrust away (because they cannot be taken hold of with Hands: But the Man that shall touch them had need be fenced with Iron, and the Staff of a Spear) and they shall be utterly burnt with Fire in the same Place.

Thus this great King, having reigned over Israel Forty Years, Seven in Hebron, and Three and Thirty in Jerusalem; and having lived to a good old Age, of Seventy Years, being full of Days, Riches, and Honour, slept with his Fathers, and was buried in his own City, the City of David, 1 Chron. 29. 26, 27, 28.

Altho' Solomon, who succeeded his Father David in the Kingdom, was but a young Man when he came to the Crown: Yet that he was married some time before, appears by the Age of his Son Rehoboam. For Rehoboam was one and Forty Years old, 2 Chron. 12. 13. when he began to reign; which was immediately after his Father's Death, who reigned but Forty Years, 1 Kings 11. 42. So that Solomon had a Son a Year old, when he began to reign.

As soon almost as he was settled on his Throne, an Occasion was unhappily offered him, to stain his Sword with his Brother Adonijah's Blood; which thus happened.

Adonijah (as was observed before) being the Eldest Son to King David then living, had aspired to the Crown, in his Father's Life time (which hastened Solomon's Accession to the Throne: But, upon his Submission, was pardoned by Solomon. He now, whether with a Design to stir up new Troubles (as was suspected,) or only taken with the Beauty of the Person; had cast an Amorous Eye upon the fair Shunamitish Dame, young Abishag, who had been a Concubinary Wife to his Father David, for some little time before his Death: But untoucht by him. And because Adonijah knew he might not enjoy her without the King's Consent, and had not of himself such an Interest in the King, as from thence to promise himself Success: He applied himself to the King's Mother, the Queen Dowager Bath-sheba, hoping by her Mediation to prevail.

When first he addrest himself to Bath-sheba, she remembering how he had acted before, and looking upon him as an Enemy to her Family, was somewhat doubtful of his Intention; and therefore asked him, *if he came Peaceably.* Which he assuring her he did; and withal telling her, that he had something to say to her: She bid him, say on. Whereupon he thus bespake her.

'Thou knowest, said he, That the Kingdom (in the right Line of Inheritance) was mine; and all Israel (so he pleased himself with thinking) set their Faces on me, expecting that I should reign. Howbeit the Kingdom is turned about, and is become my Brother's: For the Lord hath given it him. And now I ask one Petition of thee: Deny me not. She bidding him say on; he said, Speak I pray thee unto

' unto Solomon the King (for he will not say thee nay) that he give me *Abishag the Shunamite* to Wife. That I will, replied she; and ¹ King. 2. away she went to the King about it.

When the King saw her coming, he rose up to meet her; and bowing himself unto her, sat down on his Throne: And causing a Seat to be set for her, she sat on his *Right Hand*. Then telling him, she had a small Petition to ask of him, which she desired him not to deny: He bid her ask on; and somewhat too hastily promised her, that he would not say her Nay. Whereupon she said, Let *Abishag the Shunamite* be given to thy Brother *Adonijah* to Wife.

King Solomon, startled at such an unexpected Request, Answered, *And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunamite only for Adonijah? Ask for him the Kingdom also, (for he is mine Elder Brother); even for him, and for Abiathar the Priest, and for Joab the Son of Zeruiab.* For Solomon concluded they were all Three combined again, in a new Conspiracy against him. Wherefore, as before he over-hastily promised his Mother, that he would not deny her Request: So he now too readily swore by the Lord, that *Adonijah* had spoken this Word against his own Life, and should die for it out of Hand. And without more ado, such is the Mischief of Arbitrary Government, sending *Benaiah*, the Captain of his Guards, he fell upon him and killed him.

A. M.
2989.

Then sending for *Abiathar the Priest*, he said to him, *Thou art worthy of Death. Yet I will not at this time put thee to Death, because thou hast born the Ark of the Lord God before David my Father, and because thou hast had thy Share in all the Afflictions that have attended my Father. Get thee therefore to Anathoth, to thy own Possessions; and there lead a private Life.* So Solomon thrust out *Abiathar* from being Priest unto the Lord; and therein fulfilled the Word of the Lord, which he spake concerning the House of *Eli* in *Shiloh*: And put *Zadok* in his Room.

When *Joab* heard how Solomon had dealt with *Adonijah* and *Abiathar*, he thought if there was any Safety for him, it must be in the Tabernacle of the Lord. Thither therefore he betook himself, and caught hold on the Horns of the Altar; hoping for Protection from the Holiness of the Place. But he miscounted: For besides his Treason in siding with *Adonijah*, *Joab* was doubly guilty of Wilful Murder, in the premeditated Assassinations of *Abner* and *Amasa*; for which it was lawful to take the Murderer from God's Altar, and slay him, *Exod. 21. 14.* Solomon therefore, hearing that *Joab* was fled to the Altar for Refuge, bid *Benaiah* go draw him from thence, and fall upon him. Away went *Benaiah*, and told him, the King's Command was that he should come forth. *Joab*, expecting nothing but Death, resolutely answered, *Nay: But (if I must die) I will die here.*

Benaiah, unwilling to shed Blood in the Tabernacle, reported *Joab's* Answer to the King. Who thereupon bid him, *Go, do as he hath said: Fall on him there, and then bury him; that (said he) thou mayst take away the innocent Blood which Joab shed, from me and from the House of my Father. And the Lord shall return his Blood upon his own Head, who fell upon Two Men, more Righteous, and better than himself, (to wit, Abner, Captain of the Host of Israel; and Amasa, Captain of the Host of Judah) and slew them treacherously, without my Father's Knowledge:* *Benaiah* then going down again, fell upon *Joab*, and slew him; and he was buried in his own House in the Wilderness: And the King made *Benaiah* General in his room.

Shimei's turn came next; whom the King sending for, bid him build him an House in *Jerusalem*, and dwell there: And not go forth from thence any whither, on pain of Death. *Shimei*, fearing worse, was glad he

he came off so; and therefore approving the Sentence of his *Confinement* to the City, he answered, *The saying is good: As my Lord the King hath said, so will thy Servant do*; and he bound himself to it, with a *solemn Oath*.

1 King. 2.

Three Years he lived thus, strictly observing the *Bounds* of his *Confinement*. But at the Three Years end, it so fell out, that Two of his Servants ran away from him, and went to *Achish* King of *Gath*: Which when *Shimei* understood, forgetting himself, he saddled his Ass, and went forth to *Gath* to seek his Servants; and having found them, he brought them back with him to *Jerusalem*.

There wanted not some *Informer* or other, to give King *Solomon* an Account of this little *Excursion* that *Shimei* had made: Whereupon the King sent for *Shimei*, and taxing him with *Disobedience* and *Breach* of *Oath*, said unto him; 'Did I not make thee to swear by the Lord, and did not I protest also to thee, saying, Know for a certain, that on the Day thou goest out, and walkest abroad any whither, thou shalt surely die? And thou consentedst thereunto, saying, The word that I have heard is good. Why then hast thou not kept the Oath of the Lord, and the Commandment that I have charged thee with?'

A. M.
2993.

Then reminding him of his *former Offence* (for which this *Confinement* had been his *Punishment*) he said to *Shimei*, 'Thou knowest all the Wickedness, which thine Heart is privy to, that thou didst to *David* my Father. Therefore the Lord shall return thy Wickedness upon thine own Head: And King *Solomon* shall be blessed; and the Throne of *David* shall be established before the Lord for ever. Then giving the Word to *Benaiah*, he following *Shimei* out, fell upon him that he died: And the Kingdom was established in the Hand of *Solomon*.

2 Chr. 1.

Solomon now looking upon himself as *more safe*, by the removal of these *factions* Men (who were most likely to have headed a Party against him) and finding that the Lord was with him, and had strengthened him in his Kingdom; he assembled all his chief Officers, his Captains of Thousands and of Hundreds, his Judges and Governors in all *Israel*, with the chief of the Fathers: And he, with all the Congregation, went to the High-place that was at *Gibeon*. For tho' *David* had brought up the Ark of God from *Kirjath-jearim* to *Jerusalem*, where he had pitched a Tent for it: Yet the Tabernacle of the Congregation of God, which *Moses*, the Servant of the Lord had made in the Wilderness; and the *brazen Altar*, that *Bezaleel* made, remained still at *Gibeon*.

Thither went *Solomon*, and the whole Congregation, and offered a Thousand Burnt-offerings upon the *brazen Altar* before the Lord: With which the Lord was so well pleased, that he appeared to *Solomon* in a *Dream* that Night; and bid him ask what he should give him. Whereupon *Solomon* thus spake unto the Lord.

'Thou hast shewed unto thy Servant *David* my Father great Bounty, according as he walked before thee in Truth and in Righteousness, and in Uprightness of Heart with thee: And thou hast kept for him this great Kindness, that thou hast given him a Son, to sit on his Throne, as at this Day. And now, O Lord my God, seeing thou hast made thy Servant King, instead of *David* my Father, over thy chosen People, a great People that cannot be numbred for multitude; and that I, who am but *as a little Child*, know not how to behave my self in the Discharge of so great an Office: Give therefore unto thy Servant an *understanding Heart*, furnished with *Wisdom* and *Knowledge*, to judge thy People, that I may discern between Good and Bad; for (without thy Wisdom) who is able to judge this thy so great a People?'

So

So well did this Request of *Solomon's* please the Lord, that he thereupon said unto him, 'Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked *long Life, Riches, or Honour* for thy self; nor the *Life of thine Enemies*: But hast asked for thy self *Understanding, Wisdom and Knowledge* to discern Judgment, that thou mayst judge my People, over whom I have made thee King; behold I have done according to thy Words, and Wisdom and Knowledge is granted unto thee. For I have given thee a wise and an understanding Heart: So that (for Wisdom) there was none like thee before thee; neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, to wit, both *Riches and Honour*; such as none of the Kings have had that have been before thee: Neither shall there any after thee have the like. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my Statutes and my Commandments, as thy Father *David* did walk, then will I *lengthen* thy Days also.

Solomon waking from his Sleep, was sensible that he had had a Dream. And coming back to *Jerusalem* (after he had presented himself before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, and had offered Peace-offerings, and made a Feast to all his Servants.) It was not long before occasion was given him to exercise that Wisdom, which in his Dream he had asked, and the Lord had promised to give him. For a Controversie having arisen between Two Women, (who are called *Harlots*, as *Rahab* is called, *Josh. 2. 1.* but may rather perhaps be supposed to be *Vidtuaters*) they came unto the King for Judgment: And she that was the *Plaintiff* thus opened the Cause before him.

'O my Lord, said she, I and this Woman dwell in one House: And I was delivered of a Child, with her in the House. And it came to pass, that the Third Day after I was delivered, she also was delivered: But her Child died in the Night, because she overlaid it. Then, there being no stranger in the House with us, but only we two alone together; she arose at Midnight, and took my Son from beside me, while I slept, and laying it in her Bosom, laid her dead Child in my Bosom. And when I arose in the Morning, to give my Child suck, behold it was dead: But when I had well viewed and considered it in the Morning, I found it was not my Child which I did bear.

A. M.
2993.

She having thus stated her Case, the other Woman (who was the Defendant) denying the Charge, said, *Nay: But the living is my Son, and the Dead is thy Son.* The Complainant, on the other Hand, rejoined, *No: But the Dead is thy Son; and the Living is my Son.*

Thus they bandied the Cause to and fro. Which the King observing, and that there was no Witness in the Case, he called for a Sword; and when it was brought, he bid the Officer *Divide the live Child in Two, and give half to the one, and half to the other.* Which when the Plaintiff-woman heard (whose indeed the living Child was) her Bowels yearning towards her Son, she cried out to the King, *O my Lord, give her the living Child, and in no wise slay it.* But the other Woman (who being no kin to it, had not any natural Affection to it, but claimed it only to hide her own Shame, or avoid Punishment, for having Overlaid her own Child, and stolen her Neighbour's) said, *Let it be neither mine, nor thine; but divide it.* By which the King having discovered which was the true Mother, adjudged the living Child to her. And when this came to be known abroad among the People, it made them Reverence the King, and stand in awe of him: For they saw by this, that the Wisdom of God was in him, to do Judgment.

As *Solomon* had married an *Ammonitish* Woman before he was King, ^{1 Kings 4.} who we may suppose was a *Profelyte* to the *Jewish* Religion, else his godly Father *David* would not have allowed it: So now, having made Affinity with *Pharaoh* King of *Egypt*, he took his Daughter to Wife, who it is likely was a *Profelyte* also, because it is said of him presently after, That *Solomon* loved the Lord, and walked in the Statutes of *David* his Father. And because he had not yet built himself a Palace, he brought this his new Queen into the City of *David*, until he had made an end of building not only his own House, but the House of the Lord, and the Wall of *Jerusalem* round about. But afterwards he made an House for *Pharaoh's* Daughter, whom he had taken to Wife.

And now remembering the Charge which his Father King *David* had given him; and pursuant thereof, determining to build an House ^{1 Kings 5.} for the Name of the Lord: He sent unto *Hiram*, King of *Tyre* (who ^{1 Chr. 2.} was ever a lover of *David*, and who, upon hearing that *Solomon* was anointed King in the room of his Father, sent his Servants to Congratulate his Accession to the Crown.) First therefore desiring, that the Amity and Intercourse that had been between the two Crowns, might be continued, he wrote to *Hiram* after this manner.

' Thou knowest how that *David* my Father could not build an
' House unto the Name of the Lord his God, for the Wars which were
' about him on every side; until the Lord put them under the Soles of
' his Feet. But now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every
' side: So that there is neither Adversary, nor any thing else to hinder.
' Wherefore I propose to build an House unto the Name of the Lord
' my God, as the Lord spake unto *David* my Father, saying, Thy Son
' whom I will set upon my Throne in thy room, he shall build an
' House unto my Name. Now therefore give thou Command unto
' thy Workmen, that they hew me Cedar-Trees out of *Lebanon*: For
' thou knowest that there is not any among us, that have Skill to hew
' Timber, like unto the *Sidonians*, Yet my Servants shall be with
' thy Servants in the Work; and I will give thee hire for thy Servants,
' as thou shalt set the Price. Or I will give to thy Servants, the
' Hewers that shall cut the Timber, Twenty Thousand Measures of
' beaten Wheat, and Twenty Thousand Measures of Barley, and
' Twenty Thousand Baths of Wine, and Twenty Thousand Baths of
' Oil; (a Bath containing Four Gallons and a half.) He desired him also
to send him a Man that was Skilful to work in Gold, Silver, Brasses and
Iron; and for embroidering and Graving: Who might join with the
Artists which he had already, of his Father *David's* providing; and
might work with them.

When King *Hiram* (who is called also *Huram*, ^{2 Chron. 2, 3.}) had received this Message from King *Solomon*, he blessed the Lord, for having given to *David* a Wise Son, to rule over so great a People: Which he took, and rightly, to be a Token of God's Love to his People. Then returning Answer to King *Solomon* in writing, he expressed himself to this Effect.

' I have considered the Things which thou sent'st to me for, and will
' answer thy Desire concerning Timber, both of Cedar and of Fir. My
' Servants shall bring them down from *Lebanon* to the Sea; and I will
' convey them by Sea in Floats to *Joppa*, and discharge them there. And
' now I have sent thee a skilful Artift (that belonged to my Father *Hu-*
' *ram*) whose Mother was of the Tribe of *Dan*; but his Father was a
' *Tyrian*. He is endued with Understanding to work in Gold, Silver,
' Brasses, Iron, Stone and Timber; and in Purple, Blue, Crimson and
' fine Linnen: To grave also any manner of Graving; and to find out
' every

every Device, which shall be put to him. And as for the Wheat, the Barley, the Oil and the Wine, which my Lord hath spoken of let him send them unto his Servants.

Having received this Answer from Hiram, King Solomon caused the Workmen that were Strangers to be Numbred; and finding them to be an Hundred Fifty and Three Thousand and Six Hundred Men, he appointed Seventy Thousand of them to be Bearers of Burdens, and Eighty Thousand to be Hewers in the Mountain of Lebanon, and the other Three Thousand and Six Hundred he set over the rest, as Overseers of the Work. Thirty Thousand also he raised of his own People, whom he sent to Lebanon, to work with King Hiram's Men. But these being divided into Three Companies, went by their Courses, Ten Thousand at a time: Where having served their Month, they returned, and another Ten Thousand succeeded them. So that every one of these was one Month abroad in the Service, and Two Months at Home. And of these Adoniram (which signifies the high Lord) had the Oversight.

All things being thus in readiness, on the Second Day of the Second Month (by the Jews called Ziff) in the Fourth Year of his Reign (which was exactly Four Hundred and Eighty Years, from the coming up of the Children of Israel out of the the Land of Egypt) King Solomon began to build the House of the Lord, in Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared unto David; and in the very Place that David had prepared, in the Threshing-floor of Araunah (or Ornan) the Jebusite, (and where Abraham, long before, had been directed by God to offer up his Son Isaac, Gen. 22. 2.) laying the Foundations thereof of hewn Stones, great and costly. The Dimensions and Description whereof, with the Ornaments and Richness thereof the Reader may see at large in 1 Kings, 6, &c. and 2 Chron. 3, &c. And in his Eleventh Year, in the Month by the Hebrews called Bull, which is the Eighth Month, was the House finished throughout all the Parts of it. So that it was Seven Years (and Six Months) in building. And such care was taken for the Squaring, and fitting of the Materials, before they were brought thither, that there was neither Hammer nor Ax, nor any Tool of Iron heard in the House, while it was in building.

1 Kings 5.
1 Chr. 2.
A. M.
2993.

For Solomon's Encouragement, while he was building it, the Word of the Lord came to him, saying, 'Concerning this House which thou art in building; If thou wilt walk in my Statutes, and execute my Judgments, and keep all my Commandments to walk in them: Then will I perform my Word with thee, which I spake unto David thy Father; and I will dwell among my People, the Children of Israel, and will not forsake them.'

But when King Solomon had fully finished the House of the Lord, and had placed all the Vessels, for Service and Ornament, in it, he assembled the Elders of Israel, and all the Heads of the Tribes, and the chief of the Fathers of the Children of Israel in Jerusalem, to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, out of the City of David, which was Zion. Which was the more readily done, because it was the time for the Feast of Tabernacles; which by Divine appointment (Levit. 23.) was held, with other solemn Feasts, in the Seventh Month, by them called Ethanim: At which time all their Males were obliged to appear before the Lord, in the Place which he should choose (Deut. 16. 16.) which was this New-built Temple.

A. M.
3001.

Being therefore thus assembled, the Priests and Levites (whose Charge it was) took up the Ark, with the Tabernacle, and all the Holy Vessels that were in it; and having brought them up, and placed them in their respective Places, appointed for them in the Temple: When the Priests (who

1 Kings 8.
2 Chr. 5.

(who now attended in a Body) were come out of the Holy Place, and they (with the *Levites* and other Officers of the Temple) sang, with their Trumpets, and other Instruments of Musick, the 136 Psalm; the *Cloud filled the House of the Lord*, so that the Priests could not stand to minister, because of the Cloud: For the Glory of the Lord had filled the House of the Lord. Which *Solomon* observing, took occasion from thence to infer, That the Lord had taken (as it were) Possession of the Place; urging a former Saying of the Lord's, That *he would dwell in the thick Darkeness*. Which *Expression*, because we no where read it in those Terms, is supposed to be taken from *Levit. 16. 2.* where the Lord said, *I will appear in the Cloud upon the Mercy-Seat.* But I (said *Solomon*) have built thee an House to dwell in; a settled Place for thee to abide in for ever.

Then turning his Face about, he blessed all the Congregation of *Israel*, and said, 'Blessed be the Lord God of *Israel*, who hath with his Hands fulfilled that, which he spake with his Mouth to my Father *David*, when he said, Since the Day that I brought forth my People *Israel* out of *Egypt*, I chose no City out of all the Tribes of *Israel*, wherein to build an House, that my Name might be therein: But I have chosen *Jerusalem*, that my Name might be there; and I have chosen *David* to be over my People *Israel*. And whereas (added *Solomon*) it was in the Heart of my Father *David*, to build an House for the Name of the Lord God of *Israel*, the Lord, accepting the Good-will of my Father, said to him, Thou didst dwell, in that it was in thy Heart, Notwithstanding thou shalt not build the House: But thy Son, which shall come forth out of thy Loins, he shall build the House for my Name. The Lord therefore hath performed his Word that he hath spoken. For I am risen up, in the room of *David* my Father, and am set on the Throne of *Israel*, as the Lord promised; and have built the House for the Name of the Lord God of *Israel*: And in it have I put the Ark, wherein is the Covenant of the Lord, that he made with the Children of *Israel*.

Having thus made a *thankful Acknowledgment*, of the *Faithfulness* and *gracious Goodness* of the Lord, both unto him, and to his People; he kneeled down upon his Knees, before all the Congregation of *Israel*, upon the brazen Scaffold, of Five Cubits square, and Three Cubits high (which he had made, and set in the midst of the Court, before the Altar of the Lord) and spreading forth his Hands towards Heaven, he thus address'd himself unto the Lord:

'O Lord God of *Israel*, There is no God like thee in the Heaven, nor in the Earth, which keepest Covenant, and shewest Mercy unto thy Servants, that walk before thee with all their Hearts. Thou who hast kept with thy Servant *David*, my Father, that which thou promisedst him, and hast actually fulfilled what thou spakest to him (with Respect to my building this House to thee) as it is this Day: Keep, now, O Lord, with thy Servant my Father that also which thou didst promise him, when thou saidst, there shall not fail thee a Man in my Sight, to sit on the Throne of *Israel*; provided thy Children take heed to their way, to walk before me in my Law, as thou hast walked before me. Now then, O Lord God of *Israel*, let thy Word be verified, which thou hast spoken unto thy Servant *David*.

But, correcting himself (with respect to his Desire, that God would at all times vouchsafe his Presence to his People in that House) 'Will God, said he, in very deed dwell with Men on the Earth? Behold, Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens, cannot contain thee: How much less this House which I have built? Yet have thou Respect,

' added

‘ added he, unto the Prayer of thy Servant, and to his Supplication, O
 ‘ Lord my God, to hearken unto the Cry, and the Prayer, which thy ^{1 Kings 8.}
 ‘ Servant prayeth before thee this Day. That (speaking after the ^{2 Chr. 5.}
 ‘ manner of Men) thine Eyes may be open towards this House Night
 ‘ and Day: Even towards the Place of which thou hast said, That thou
 ‘ wouldst put thy Name there. That thou mayst hearken to the Prayer
 ‘ which thy Servant shall make in this Place. And hearken to the Sup-
 ‘ plication of thy Servant, and of thy People *Israel*, when they shall
 ‘ pray towards this Place. And hear thou in Heaven, thy Dwelling-
 ‘ place: And *when thou hearest, forgive.*

Having thus *supplicated* the Lord in *general* Terms, he descended
 to *Particulars*, saying,

‘ If a Man trespass against his Neighbour, and an *Oath* be required
 ‘ of him; whereupon he come to Swear before thine Altar in this House:
 ‘ Then hear thou from Heaven, and do, and judge thy Servants; *con-*
 ‘ *demning the Wicked*, to Recompence his way upon his Head; and
 ‘ *justifying the Righteous*, to give him according to his Righteousness.

‘ If thy People *Israel* be smitten down before the Enemy because
 ‘ they have sinned against thee; and they shall turn again to thee, and
 ‘ confess thy Name, and shall pray, and make Supplication unto thee,
 ‘ towards this House: Then hear thou in Heaven, and forgive the Sin of
 ‘ thy People *Israel*; and bring them again unto the Land, which thou
 ‘ gavest unto them and to their Fathers.

‘ When the Heaven is shut, and there is no *Rain*, because they have
 ‘ sinned against thee; If they pray towards this Place, and Confess thy
 ‘ Name, and turn from their Sin when thou dost afflict them: Then
 ‘ hear thou in Heaven, and forgive the Sin of thy Servants, and of thy
 ‘ People *Israel*, and teach them the good way wherein they should
 ‘ walk; and send Rain upon the Land which thou hast given to thy
 ‘ People for an Inheritance.

‘ If there be Famine in the Land, If there be *Pestilence, Blasting, Mil-*
 ‘ *dew, Locusts, or Caterpillars*; If their Enemies besiege them in the Ci-
 ‘ ties of their Land; whatsoever Plague, or Sickness befall them;
 ‘ what Prayer or Supplication soever shall be made by any Man, or by
 ‘ all thy People *Israel*, when every Man shall know his own Plague,
 ‘ and his own Grief, and shall spread forth his Hands towards this House:
 ‘ Then hear thou in Heaven, thy Dwelling-Place, and forgive, and
 ‘ render unto every Man according to his ways, whose Heart thou
 ‘ knowest (for thou only knowest the Hearts of the Children of Men;)
 ‘ that they may fear thee, to walk in thy ways all the Days that they
 ‘ live in the Land which thou gavest unto our Fathers.

‘ Moreover, concerning the Stranger, which is not of thy People
 ‘ *Israel*, but cometh out from a far Country, for thy great Name’s
 ‘ sake, (for they shall hear of thy great Name, and of thy strong Hand,
 ‘ and of thy stretched out Arm;) when he shall come, and pray to-
 ‘ wards this House: Then hear thou in Heaven, thy Dwelling-place,
 ‘ and do according to all that the Stranger calleth unto thee for; that
 ‘ all the People of the Earth may know thy Name, and fear thee (as
 ‘ doth thy People *Israel*) and that they may know that this House,
 ‘ which I have builded, is called by thy Name.

‘ If thy People go out to Battel against their Enemy, whitherso-
 ‘ ever thou shalt send them, and shalt pray unto thee towards this
 ‘ City, which thou hast chosen, and towards the House that I have
 ‘ built for thy Name: Then hear thou in Heaven their Prayer and
 ‘ Supplication, and *maintain their Cause*. If they sin against thee
 ‘ (for there is no Man but may sin [*qui non peccet*]) So *Jerom*, so *Pagnine*,
 ‘ so

^{1 Kings 8.} ' so *Arias Montanus*, so *Tremellius* and *Junius* turn it, and so *Dr. Gell*
 reads it, and contends that it should be read, *Essay p. 768.*) and thou be
 ' angry with them, and deliver them unto the Enemy, that they carry
 ' them away Captives into a Land far or near; yet if they shall be-
 ' think themselves, in the Land whither they are carried Captives, and
 ' shall repent, and make Supplication unto thee, in the Land of them
 ' that carried them Captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done
 ' perversly, and have committed Wickedness, and so return unto thee
 ' with all their Heart, and with all their Soul, and pray unto
 ' thee towards their Land, which thou gavest unto their Fathers, the
 ' City which thou hast chosen, and the House which I have built for
 ' thy Name: Then hear thou their Prayer and Supplication in Hea-
 ' ven, thy Dwelling-place, and maintain their Cause, and forgive thy
 ' People, that have sinned against thee, all their Transgressions, wherein
 ' they have transgressed against thee; and give them Compassion before
 ' them who carried them Captives, that they may have Compassion
 ' on them. For they be thy People, and thine Inheritance, which thou
 ' didst bring forth out of *Egypt*, from the midst of the *Furnace of*
 ' *Iron*. Let now, O my God, I beseech thee, thine Eyes be open, and
 ' thine Ears attentive, unto the Prayer that shall be made in this Place.
 ' Arise now therefore, O Lord God, into thy Resting-Place (so he cal-
 ' led this fixed Temple, in comparison of the moving Tabernacle) Thou,
 ' and the Ark of thy Strength. And let thy Priests, O Lord God, be
 ' clothed with Salvation, and thy Saints (or merciful ones) rejoice in thy
 ' Goodness.

When *Solomon* had ended his Prayer, and Supplication to the Lord, he
 arose from his Knees, and standing up before the Altar of the Lord, he
 blessed the Congregation of *Israel*, saying with a loud Voice, ' Blessed
 ' be the Lord that hath given Rest unto his People *Israel*, according to
 ' all that he promised; not one Word having failed of all his good
 ' Promise, which he promised by the Hand of *Moses* his Servant.
 ' The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our Fathers. Let
 ' him not leave us, nor forsake us; that he may incline our Hearts
 ' unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his Commandments,
 ' his Statutes, and his Judgments, which he commanded our Fathers.
 ' And (added he) let these my Words, wherewith I have made Supplica-
 ' tion before the Lord, be nigh unto the Lord our God Day and
 ' Night; that he may maintain the Cause of his Servant, and the
 ' Cause of his People *Israel* at all times, as the Matter shall require:
 ' That all the People of the Earth may know that the Lord is God; and
 ' that there is none else.

^{2 Chron. 7.} Then turning his Speech more directly to the People, ' Let your
 ' Heart therefore (said he) be perfect with the Lord our God, to
 ' walk in his Statutes, and to keep his Commandments, as at this Day.

When thus the King had finished his Prayer and Blessing, both he, and
 all the People with him, offered Sacrifices before the Lord. And the
 Lord, to testify his Acceptance of *Solomon's* Prayer, sent Fire from Hea-
 ven, which consumed the Burnt-offering, and the Sacrifices. And the
 Glory of the Lord filled the House, so that the Priests could not enter
 into the House of the Lord, because of the Glory of the Lord that
 filled it. And when all the Children of *Israel* saw the Fire come
 down, and the Glory of the Lord upon the House, they bowed them-
 selves upon the Pavement, with their Faces to the Ground, and praised
 the Lord, repeating those Words of the 136 Psalm, *For he is good,*
for his Mercy endureth for ever.

At this *Dedication* of the House of the Lord, the King and all *Israel* joining, they offered a Peace-offering unto the Lord of Two and Twenty Thousand Oxen, and an Hundred and Twenty Thousand Sheep; the Priests waiting on their Offices, and the *Levites* playing on their Instruments of Musick, which King *David* had made to praise the Lord with. And because the *brazen Altar*, which *Solomon* had made (tho' it was Twenty Cubits (or Yards) Square, 2 *Chron.* 4. 1.) was too little to receive the Offerings, the King hallowed the middle of the Court, that was before the House of the Lord, and offered Burnt-offerings there.

Thus King *Solomon*, having held a Solemn Feast, and all *Israel* with him, for *Fourteen Days* together (*Seven Days* for the Feast of *Tabernacles*) on the Three and Twentieth of the Second Month (which was the Eighth Day after the Feast of *Tabernacles* began, and the next Day after it was ended) he sent the People away: Who blessing the King, went unto their Tents joyful, and glad in Heart, for all the Goodness, that the Lord had shewed unto *David* and *Solomon* his Servants, and to his People *Israel*. 1 Kings 9.

After this Solemn Dedication of the House of the Lord, the Lord appeared again to *Solomon* by Night, as he had appeared unto him before at *Gibeon* (1 *Kings* 3. 5.) and said unto him, 'I have heard thy Prayer, 'and have chosen this Place to my self, for an House of Sacrifice, 'and have hallowed it, to put my Name there for ever: Mine Eyes and 'my Heart shall be there perpetually. And if thou wilt walk before 'me, as *David* thy Father walked, in Integrity of Heart, and in Uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep 'my Statutes and my Judgments: Then will I establish the *Throne* of 'thy Kingdom upon *Israel* for ever; as I promised *David* thy Father, 'when I said, There shall not fail thee a Man upon the *Throne* of *Israel*. But if you shall at all turn from me, you or your Children, 'and will not keep my Commandments and my Statutes, which I have 'set before you; but go and serve other Gods, and worship them: 'Then will I cut off *Israel* out of the Land which I have given them; 'and this House which I have hallowed for my Name, will I cast out 'of my Sight, and *Israel* shall be a *Proverb*, and a *By-word* amongst 'all People. And at this House which is high, every one that passeth 'by shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and shall say, why hath the 'Lord done thus unto this Land and to this House? And they shall 'answer, Because they forsook the Lord their God, who brought forth 'their Fathers out of the Land of *Egypt*, and have taken hold upon (or 'put their Confidence in) other Gods, and have Worshipped them, 'and served them: Therefore hath the Lord brought upon them all 'this Evil.

When King *Solomon* had finished the House of the Lord, he built a stately Palace, for himself and his Queen (*Pharaoh's* Daughter) to dwell in; which was *Thirteen Years* in building (1 *Kings* 7. 1.) Not that he was either more curious, or more magnificent in building his own House, than in building the Lord's. But he had his Materials to provide for his own House; most of which were provided in readiness, by his Father, for the Lord's House: And he employed more Workmen, for Expedition-sake, about the Lord's House, than about his own. And when this Palace was finished, and furnished; he brought up his Queen (the Daughter of *Pharaoh*) from the old Palace, which was called the City of *David*, and settled her in the House he had built for her: For he said, My Wife shall not dwell in the House of *David* King of *Israel*. 2 Chr. 8. 11.
Because the Places are holy, whereunto the Ark of the Lord hath come.

A. M.
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Divers other Houses also did *Solomon* afterwards build; whereof that ^{1 Kings 9.} seems to be the chief, which was called *The Forest of Lebanon*: Which being an Hundred Cubits in Length, Fifty Cubits in Breadth; and Thirty Cubits in Height, was set upon *Cedar-Pillars* in four Rows, and is described in *1 Kings 7. 2, &c.*

King *Solomon*, having received great Kindness from *Hiram* King of *Tyre* (who had furnished him with Timber of Cedar and of Fir, and with Gold in abundance;) he in requital gave *Hiram* Twenty Cities in the Land of *Galilee*: Which bordering upon *Tyre*, is reckoned by *Tremellius* and *Junius* a part of the Holy Land, and for that Reason, perhaps, is called *Galilee* of the *Gentiles*, *Mat. 4. 15.* yet others think otherwise.

But when *Hiram* came from *Tyre* to see these Cities; they did not please him at all. Wherefore to shew his dislike of them, he asked *Solomon*, *What Cities are these which thou hast given me, my Brother?* And calling them *The Land of Cabul* (that is *displeasing*, or *dirty*) he restored them to *Solomon*: Who afterwards rebuilt these Cities, and sending Colonies of the Children of *Israel* thither, caused them to dwell therein; which probably occasion'd our Saviour to be so conversant afterwards in *Galilee*.

But tho' *Hiram* did not accept *Solomon's* Present; yet no unkindness, or Breach of Friendship, ensued thereon, between the Two Kings. For *Solomon*, having built a Navy of Ships in *Ezion-Geber*, at the Seaside, in the Land of *Edom*, *Hiram* not only joined some of his own Ships with King *Solomon's*, but furnished him also with *expert Mariners* to *Man his Fleet* to *Ophir*: From whence they fetched Four Hundred and Twenty (or, as in *2 Chron. 8. 18.* Four Hundred and Fifty) Talents of Gold; of which they are said to have brought Four Hundred Talents to *Solomon*, and the rest, it is supposed, were spent in the Expedition.

King *Hiram* also is said to have sent to King *Solomon* Sixscore Talents ^{1 Kin. 10.} of Gold, *1 Kings 9. 14.* And the weight of Gold that came to *Solomon* ^{1 Chr. 9.} in one Year, was Six Hundred Sixty and Six Talents of Gold, *Chap. 10. 14.* Besides what he had of the Merchants, and of the Kings of *Arabia*, and the Governours of Countries, *ver. 15.* And so plentiful was Gold in his time, that Silver was of no account: For not only the Vessels of his House were of Gold, *ver. 21.* But he made Two Hundred Targets, and Three Hundred Shields, all of beaten Gold, *ver. 16. 17.* A Throne also of Ivory, overlaid with the best Gold, *ver. 18, &c.*

Now did *Solomon* experience the fulfilling of that gracious Promise, which the Lord had made him (*1 Kings 3. 12, 13.*) That because he had not asked Riches, nor Honour; but only Wisdom (and that, *not for Ostentation*, but for *real Service*, that he might judge and govern his People aright;) God gave him both Wisdom, Riches and Honour; so that he exceeded all the Kings of the Earth, for Riches and for Wisdom. And as they all sought to *Solomon*, that they might hear his Wisdom, which God had put into his Heart: So they brought him every Man his Present, Vessels of Silver, and Vessels of Gold, and Garments, and Armour, and Spices, with Horses and Mules, a certain Rate Year by Year.

For God had given *Solomon* Wisdom and Understanding; and had enlarged his Heart exceedingly: So that he excelled in Wisdom all the *Philosophers* and *Astrologers* of *Egypt*, and of all the East-Country. And tho' *Ethan* the *Ezrahite*, and *Heman* (mentioned in the Titles of *Psal. 88.* and *Psal. 89.*) with *Chalcol* and *Darda*, were the most celebrated

Men

Men of those times for Wisdom: Yet he was wiser than they; and indeed than all Men. He spake Three Thousand *Proverbs*, most of which ^{1 Kin. 10.} ^{1 Chr. 9.} are thought to have been lost in the Captivity) and his *Songs* were a Thousand and Five. He discoursed also of the Natures, Properties and Vertues of all Trees, Plants and Herbs; and of Beasts, Fowls, Creeping Things and Fishes: So that his *Fame* being spread in all Nations round about, there came of all People to hear his Wisdom, from all the Kings of the Earth that had heard of it, 1 Kings 4. 29, &c.

Among the many, whom the *Fame* of his *Wisdom* and *Grandeur* drew to his Court, the *Ethiopian Queen* (called in *Matt.* 12. 42. *The Queen of the South*, and here, the *Queen of Sheba*) was one. Who having heard much of the *Fame* of *Solomon*, and concerning the *Name of the Lord*, had a Desire to try his *Skill*, in resolving *difficult Questions*; and for that end came from her own Country to *Jerusalem*, attended with a very great Train: And having made a *Royal Present* to King *Solomon*, of abundance of rich *Spices*, with *Precious Stones*, and very much *Gold* (no less than an Hundred and Twenty Talents) she conferred with him, and propounded *Riddles* to him; and he resolved them all. For there was nothing hid from him, of the most *abstruse* and knotty Questions, which he did not open to her.

This filled her with *Admiration* of his *profound Wisdom*. But when she had viewed the House of the Lord, which he had built, and his own House, and had duly considered the *Oeconomy* of his Household, the Provisions of his Table, the Degrees and Order of his Servants, and the Attendance of his Ministers, with their Apparel; but more especially, the stately *Ascent* he had made, by which he went up to the House of the Lord, she was even overcome with Wonder, and said to the King, *It was indeed a true Report, which I heard in mine own Land, of thine Acts and of thy Wisdom: Howbeit, I believed not the Words, until I came, and mine own Eyes had seen it. And now I find the one Half of the Greatness of thy Wisdom was not told me: For thou exceedest the Fame that I had heard.*

Then breaking forth into *Admiration* and *Praise*, she added, *Happy are thy Men, and happy are these thy Servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy Wisdom. And blessed be the Lord thy God, who delighted in thee, to set thee on the Throne of Israel. Because the Lord loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee King over them, to do Judgment and Justice.*

Thus this great *Queen*, having satisfied her *Curiosity* in seeing, and improved her *Understanding* in conversing with the *Wise*st of Kings; and having been fully answered by him in whatsoever she desired of him: Took her leave of the *Hebrew Court*, and returned with her Attendance to her own Land, laden with a *Royal Present* from the King, and filled with *Admiration* of his *Wisdom* and *Magnificence*.

For he kept so great a *Table*, that the daily *Provision* for his House, was Thirty Measures (or Cors, as the Margin gives it) of fine *Flour*, and Threescore of *Meal*. And the Hebrew Cor being computed by *Godwyn* in his *Moses* and *Aaron*, l. 6. c. 9. p. 290.) to contain Five Bushels and Five Gallons, the Thirty Cors of fine *Flour*, make an Hundred Sixty Eight Bushels and Six Gallons. According to which Computation the Sixty Cors of *Meal* must make Three Hundred Thirty Seven Bushels and Four Gallons: Both Sorts, *Flour* and *Meal*, Five Hundred and Six Bushels and Two Gallons. Which reduced to *Quarters*, bring out, if I miscount not, Sixty Three Quarters, Two Bushels and Two Gallons. For *Flesh*, his Daily Provision, was Ten fat *Oxen*, and Twenty *Oxen* out of the Pastures, an Hundred *Sheep*: Besides *Harts*, *Roe-bucks*, *Fal-*

low-deer, and Fatted Fowl. In his *Stables* he had Four Thousand *Stalls* for Horses and Chariots, and Twelve Thousand Horsemen, which were bestowed in the Chariot-Cities, and with the King at *Jerusalem*.

But notwithstanding the great and excellent *Wisdom*, wherewith God had endued *Solomon*, the high *Favours* he had vouchsafed him, the Eminent *Appearances* of God unto him, and the gracious *Promises* he had made him, in case he persevered to walk in his Fear, as *David* had done, and to keep his Law; yet *Solomon* let loose the Reins of his Affection, not only to many Women, but to strange Women, Strangers to the Covenant, such as were not *Israelites* by Nature, nor of *Israel* by Profession; but of the *Idolatrous Nations* (*Moabites*, *Ammonites*, *Edomites*, *Zidonians* and *Hittites*) which the Lord had expressly prohibited, for *Israel* in general, and their King in particular, to contract Marriage with, *Deut.* 17. 17. as knowing they would certainly turn away their Heart after their Gods.

And to that Degree of *Excess* he went, that he took no less than Seven Hundred Wives, and with them Three Hundred Concubines: Who, among them, so turned away his Heart from following the Lord, that he did evil in the Sight of the Lord: Going after *Asheroth*, the Goddess of the *Zidonians*; and after *Milcom* the Abomination of the *Ammonites*; and built an High-place for *Chemosh* the Abomination of *Moab*, in the Hill that was before *Jerusalem*; as he did likewise for all his strange Wives, which burned Incense, and Sacrificed unto their Gods.

This so provoked the Anger of the Lord against *Solomon*, that he said unto him (probably by the Prophet *Abijah*, mentioned after, in *ver.* 29.)
 ' For as much as thou hast done thus; and hast not kept my Covenant,
 ' and my Statutes, which I have commanded thee: I will surely
 ' rend the Kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy Servant. Not-
 ' withstanding, in thy Days I will not do it, for *David* thy Father's
 ' sake: But I will rend it out of the Hand of thy Son. Yet I will not
 ' rend away all the Kingdom: But I will give one Tribe to thy Son, for
 ' *David* my Servant's sake, and for the sake of *Jerusalem*, which I
 ' have chosen.

As therefore the Lord had given unto *Solomon* Peace, and Rest from all his Enemies, while he kept his Commandments, and walked with him: So now that he forsook the Lord, and turned after other Gods; the Lord stirred up *Adversaries* against him on every Hand.

Of these, *Hadad* the *Edomite* was one. Who being of the King's Seed in *Edom*, and but a little Child, at such time as *David* brought *Edom* into Subjection, and *Joab* cut off all the Males there, (of which see *2 Sam.* 8. 14. with *1. King.* 11. 15, 16, 17.) was by his Father's Servants conveyed in to *Egypt*, and presented unto *Pharaoh* King of *Egypt*: From whom he found so great Favour, that he not only gave him Protection and Maintenance; but when he was grown up, bestowed on him in Marriage the Sister of his own Wife, *Queen Tahpenes*. But when *Hadad* understood that both King *David*, and his General *Joab* were Dead, he prevailed with *Pharaoh* to send him back, to his own Country, *Edom*, from whence he did Mischief to *Israel*.

Besides him, God stirred up another *Adversary* to *Solomon*, one *Rezon* the Son of *Eliadah*; who flying from his Lord *Hadadezar* King of *Zobah*, had gathered a Band of Men unto him, over whom he became a Captain, and seizing on *Damascus*, reigned therein over *Syria*; and was an Enemy to *Israel*, all the Days of *Solomon's* declining from the way of the Lord.

Another *Adversary*, and in the Event the worst of them all, was *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*, an *Ephraimite* of *Zereda*, a Subject and Ser-
 vant

vant of *Solomon's*; whom the King, when he built *Millo* (or the Fortrefs) and repaired the Breaches of the City of *David*, observing to be both a *King. 11.* mighty Man of Valour, and very industrious in his Buſineſs, made Ruler over all the Charge of the Houſe of *Joſeph*.

Him the Lord ſingled out, to be a *Scourge* to *Solomon's* Houſe: And in order thereunto, ſent the Prophet *Abijah* the *Shilonite*, to meet him in the way, when he was gone out of *Jeruſalem*. And they Two being alone in the Field, the Prophet caught hold of the new Garment that was on him, and having rent it into *Twelve Pieces*, ſaid to *Jeroboam*, Take thee *Ten Pieces*: For thus ſaith the Lord, the God of *Israel*.

' Behold, I will rend the Kingdom out of the Hand of *Solomon*, and
' will give *Ten Tribes* to thee, becauſe they have forſaken me, and have
' worſhipped *Aſhteroth* the Goddeſs of the *Zidonians*, *Chemosh* the God
' of the *Moabites*, and *Milcom* the God of the Children of *Ammon*, and
' have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine Eyes,
' and to keep my Statutes and my Judgments, as did *David* his Father.

' For this Cauſe I will afflict the Seed of *David*, but not for ever;
' neither will I take the whole Kingdom out of *Solomon's* Hand: But
' he ſhall have one (*intire*) Tribe, for my Servant *David's* ſake, and
' for the ſake of *Jeruſalem* (the City which I have choſen out of all
' the Tribes of *Israel*) that *David* my Servant may have a Light (of
' Royal Splendor) always before me in *Jeruſalem*. And becauſe my
' Servant *David* whom I choſe, kept my Commandments, and my Sta-
' tutes, I will for his ſake continue his Son *Solomon* Prince over *Israel*
' during his Life: But I will take the Kingdom out of his Son's Hand,
' and will give it unto thee, even *Ten Tribes*. And I will take thee,
' and thou ſhalt be King over all *Israel*, and ſhalt reign according to
' thy Heart's Deſire. And if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command
' thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that which is right in my
' Sight, to keep my Statutes and my Commandments, as *David* my
' Servant did: Then will I be with thee, and build thee a ſure Houſe, as
' I built for *David*; and will give *Israel* unto thee.

Tho' *Jeroboam* and the Prophet were alone in a Field by themſelves, when this paſſed between them: Yet *Solomon* ſoon got Notice of it; and ſought to kill *Jeroboam* upon it. But he making his Eſcape, fled unto *Shiſhak* King of *Egypt*, and there abode with him until the Death of *Solomon*: To which the Courſe of the *Hiſtory* hath now brought us. For we read no more of his *Life* or *Acts*, but that having reigned in *Jeruſalem*, over all *Israel*, *Forty Years*, he ſlept with his Fathers, and was buried in the City of his Father *David*.

For the reſt of his *Acts*, and all that he did, and his *Wiſdom* (of which, no doubt, many and various *Inſtances* muſt occur, in the *Forty Years* Reign of ſo great and ſo wiſe a Prince) we are here referr'd to the *Book of the Acts of Solomon*: A Book queſtionleſs loſt, with other excellent *Pieces* of his. In *2 Chron. 9. 29.* for a further Account of the *Acts* of *Solomon*, firſt and laſt, we are referred to the Book of *Nathan* the Prophet, to the Prophecy of *Abijah* the Prophet, and to the Viſions of *Iddo* the Seer: None of which are now extant, at leaſt under thoſe Titles.

Concerning *Solomon*, and his latter end, the Opinions of Men are different. But that ſeems the moſt charitable, which concludes he repented in his old Age, returned to God, and humbling himſelf before the Lord, wrote his Book called *Kohelerth*, *Eccleſiaſtes*, or the *Preacher*; as an Acknowledgment of his own Apoſtacy, and a Warning or Admonition, with Inſtruction to all others to beware of, and reſiſt the Vanities of the World.

Concerning

Concerning his *Age* also there is some Difference. *Hugh Broughton* ^{1 Kin. 12.} gives him but *Eight* and *Fifty* Years. *Richard Bloome*, in his *Hist.* of the Old and New Testament, *Quarto Edit.* (whom for *Chronology* I generally follow) makes him above *Sixty* Years of Age. But that must be a Mistake, if (as he also acknowledges) he came to the Throne at *Eighteen*: For it is expressly said, the time of his Reign was *Forty Years* (1 Kings 11. 42. 2 Chron. 9. 30.) which makes his Age to be but *Fifty Eight* Years.

A. M. 3029. Solomon being dead, *Rehoboam*, his Son, and in part Successor, went to *Schechem*, whither all *Israel* were gathered together, to make him King. But being somewhat *uneasie* under the *Burdens* his Father had laid upon them (partly, perhaps, in *personal Service* towards his Buildings; and partly also, by his *Purveyors*, for *Provisions* for his House, of which the *Account rises high*, in 1 Kings 4.) They were willing to make some *better Terms* for themselves before they set the *Crown* upon his Head.

Wherefore having sent, and called *Jeroboam* out of *Egypt*, as the Man they thought most likely to awe *Rehoboam*, and bring him to a *reasonable Compliance* with their Desires, the whole Congregation of *Israel*, having *Jeroboam* at the Head of them (and probably their *Spokesman*) thus spake unto *Rehoboam*.

'Thy Father made our *Yoke* grievous: Now therefore make thou the grievous *Service* of thy Father *easier*, and his *heavy Yoke*, which he put upon us, *lighter*; and we will serve thee.

Rehoboam, not thinking it safe, in so weighty a matter, to give an *hasty Answer*, but willing to be *advised*, before he *resolved* on a Proposition of so *great moment*; bid them depart for *Three Days*, and then come to him again for an Answer: Which they did.

Mean while, consulting with the *Old Men*, who had been Counsellors to his Father *Solomon*; and asking them how they would advise him to answer the People: They said, *If thou wilt be a Servant unto this People this Day, and wilt answer them kindly, and give them good Words; they will be thy Servants for ever.*

This good Counsel not suiting *Rehoboam's Evil Humour*, he laid it aside: And betaking himself to his *young Counsellors*, that were grown up with him, he asked them what Answer they would advise him to give. They, like *young Men* indeed, that had more *Heat* than *Judgment*, advised him to tell the People, who came to desire a *Redress* of *Grievances*, That his *little Finger* (using a *Proverbial Speech*) should be *thicker* than his Father's *Loins*. And whereas they complained that his Father had loaded them with a *heavy Yoke*, he would add to their *Yoke*, and make it *more heavy*. And if they thought his Father had chastised them with *Whips*, they should find, he would chastise them with *SCORPIONS*. Where, by *Scorpions* is meant a sort of *Scourges*, made of leathern *Thongs*, at the ends of which were fastened either little *Bones*, or *Plummets* of *Lead*, or *sharp Thorns*, to make the Punishment the sharper. See *Godwyn's Moses and Aaron*, l. 5. c. 8.

Rehoboam, for Age, was past a Child, and old enough, one would think, to have preferred the Advice of his old Counsellors: For he was one and *Forty Years* Old, 1 Kings 14. 21. But, *Quos vult perdere Deus, hos dementat*: Whom God will destroy, he bereaves of understanding. The Cause was of the Lord, that he might perform his Saying, which he had spoken by his Prophet *Abijah*, the *Shilonite*, to *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat* (Chap. 11. 30, 31.) Therefore was *Rehoboam* so void of Understanding, that rejecting the good Advice of his grave Counsellors, he closed with the Counsel of his young *Hot-headed* Companions. And when

when *Jeroboam*, with the People, came to him, on the Third Day, for his Answer, he roundly gave it them in those *harsh* Terms, which his young Counsellors had dictated to him. 2 Kin. 12.
1 Chr. 10.

But no sooner had the People heard the Answer (which put them out of all Hopes of Redress) but they (that is, the *Ten Tribes*) cried out unanimously, *What Portion have we in David? Neither have we Inheritance in the Son of Jesse: Every Man to your Tents, O Israel: And now see to thy own House, David* (Look to thy self, *Rehoboam*, David's Son; stand on thy own Legs, and expect no help from us.) And in this Heat they departed to their Tents.

Being gone, *Rehoboam* to try their Temper, sent to them one of his prime Ministers, *Adoram*, who was over the Tribute: But they fell presently upon him, and stoned him to Death. This made *Rehoboam* conclude they were in earnest, and think it high time to consult his own Safety: Wherefore with speed getting into his Chariot, he fled to *Jerusalem*; sensible of his Error too late.

Mean while, those *Ten Tribes*, which had thus revolted from the House of *David* (and which thenceforward, in Distinction from the House of *Judah*, bare the Name of *Israel*) calling *Jeroboam* unto the Congregation, made him King over them.

Thus was that great and goodly Kingdom (as a Punishment for the Idolatry of their King, hastened to Execution by the haughty Rashness of his Son and Successor) even almost in its very Infancy, split into Two very unequal Parts; *Ten* against *Two*: Which yet must be understood by a *Synecdoche Partis*; the greater Part, on either side, being taken for the Whole. For some of the Tribes, in the drawing out the Lots of their Possessions, being intermixed with others (as *Manasseh* had divers Towns in *Issachar* and in *Asher*, Josh. 17. 11. and *Simeon's* Inheritance was within the Inheritance of the Children of *Judah*, Josh. 19. 1.) Such of the Children of *Israel*, as dwelt in the Cities of *Judah*, continued their Subjection to *Rehoboam*, 1 King. 12. 17. And perhaps some part of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, bordering upon some of the other Tribes that fell away to *Jeroboam*, might go along with their Neighbours, and take him for their King. Which might give ground for that Saying in the Text, ver. 20. There was none (that is, no entire Tribe) that followed the House of *David*, but the Tribe of *Judah* only. For otherwise we find all along, that *Benjamin* (that is, the main Body of that Tribe) clave to the House of *David*, in Conjunction with the Tribe of *Judah*.

Rehoboam resenting the Affront done him by the *Israelites*, in killing his Treasurer *Adoram*; and resolving to reduce those his Rebellious Subjects to their Obedience, by Force of Arms (to which, it is likely, his Hot-spur Counsellors were not backward to excite him) as soon as he was got safe to *Jerusalem*, he assembled all the House of *Judah*: Out of which, together with the Tribe of *Benjamin*, he mustered an Hundred and Fourscore Thousand chosen Men, which were Warriours, to fight against the House of *Israel*; that he might bring that Kingdom again under his Subjection.

But when he was upon his March, the Word of God came unto *Shemajah* the Man of God, commanding him to speak unto *Rehoboam*, and unto all the House of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, and to the Remnant of the People (which in 2 Chron. 11. 3. is called, All *Israel* in *Judah* and *Benjamin*) which I take to be all those of the other Tribes, (which were intermixed with either of those Two Tribes) and to say unto them, Thus saith the Lord, ye shall not go up nor fight against your Brethren the Children of *Israel*. Return every Man to his House: For this Thing is

of me. Which Message being delivered to them; they obeyed the Word of the Lord, and returned from going against *Jeroboam*.

2 Chr. 11. This dangerous Storm thus, by a Divine Breath, blown over, each of the Kings used his Endeavours, to settle and strengthen himself in his Kingdom: But after different Manners. For *Rehoboam* dwelling at *Jerusalem*, built very many Cities, for Defence, in *Judah* and in *Benjamin*: Fortifying the Strong-holds, and placing his own Sons for Captains in them, with Store of Provisions and Ammunition; whereby he made them exceeding Strong.

But that which strengthened him most, and gave him the greatest Advantage over his Rival, *Jeroboam*, was his and his People's Cleaving to the Lord, and keeping the Law of God; which at first, for a while, they did: For it is said, *They walked for Three Years, in the Way of David and Solomon*; which, with respect to *Solomon*, must be understood of the time, either before he fell into Idolatry, or after he repented, and returned from it.

Jeroboam, on the contrary, calling to mind, that by the Law of God, (*Deut. 16. 16.*) All the Males of *Israel* were to appear before the Lord, three times a Year, in the Place which he should chuse; which was now at *Jerusalem*, the Royal Seat of *Rehoboam's* Kingdom: He concluded that this would be a means to divest him of his New Kingdom. For (said he, within himself) *If this People go up to do Sacrifice in the House of the Lord at Jerusalem, then will their Heart turn again to their Lord, and they will kill me, and go again to Rehoboam King of Judah.*

Distrust brought Fear, and Fear led to Evil Counsel: For, to prevent this surmised Danger, it is said, *he took Counsel* (either of his own Evil Heart, or some Instruments as Wicked as himself) and made Two Calves of Gold; representing thereby the Gods of the Egyptians, amongst whom he, for some time past, had lived an Exile. And under pretence of easing his Subjects of the Toil, and Expence of going up to *Jerusalem* to worship, he said unto them, *It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: Behold thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the Land of Egypt.*

These Calves he set, the one in *Beth-el*: The other in *Dan*. The former in the Southern Quarter, the latter in the Northern part of his Kingdom, that he might accommodate his People each way, and prevent their going up to *Jerusalem*. But this thing became a Sin; and is branded for Devil-worship, *2 Chron. 11. 15.*

Jeroboam made also an House of High-places (which the Marginal *1 Kin. 13.* Note in the Bishop's Bible calls, A Temple, where Altars were built for Idolatry:) And Priests he made of the lowest of the People, who were not of the Sons of *Levi*. For he and his Sons cast out the Priests and Levites, not suffering them to execute the Priests Office unto the Lord. Which made the Priests, and the Levites throughout *Israel*, forsake their Suburbs, their Possessions, and betake themselves to *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, for Shelter and Maintenance. And after them came also to *Jerusalem*, out of all the Tribes of *Israel* such as set their Hearts to seek the Lord God of *Israel*, to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their Fathers. By which means *Rehoboam*, and the Kingdom of *Judah*, was very much strengthened.

And whereas God had appointed the Feast of Tabernacles to begin on the Fifteenth Day of the Seventh Month, *Lev. 23. 34.* *Jeroboam* appointed his Feast, to begin on the Fifteenth Day of the Eighth Month: Which therefore is called in Contempt, *The Month which he had devised of his own Heart.* And perhaps he might have this Reach in his Mind, in settling his wrong Feast a Month after the right Feast at *Jerusalem*, that the

the People of *Judah*, their own *Feast* being over, might have Opportunity to come to this *Feast* of his, if *Curiosity* and desire of *Novelty* would draw them. *Kin. 13.*

At this *Feast* of his own appointing, while *Jeroboam* the King stood by his *Altar* at *Beth-el*, to offer *Sacrifice* to the *Calf* that he had set up there; A Man of God came out of *Judah* by the Word of the Lord, and crying against the *Altar* in the Word of the Lord, he said, 'O *Altar*, *Altar*, Thus saith the Lord, Behold a *Child* shall be born unto the House of *David*, *Josiah* by Name; and upon thee shall he offer the *Priests* of the *High-places*, that burn *Incense* upon thee, and *Men's Bones* shall be burnt upon thee. A. M. 3030.

And because this was a *Prophecy* of a *future* Event, which none there present could live to see: (For *Josiah*, of whom this was predicted, was not born till Three Hundred Years after) therefore the Man of God, to confirm his *Prophecy*, gave a *Sign*, which they should see performed the same Day. This (said he) is the *Sign* which the Lord hath spoken, Behold, the *Altar* shall be rent; And the *Ashes*, that are upon it, shall be poured out.

As soon as *Jeroboam* had heard the Saying of the Man of God, who had cried against the *Altar* in *Beth-el*, he put forth his Hand from the *Altar*, and said, Lay hold on him! But his Hand, which he put forth against the Man of God, dried up; so that he could not pull it in again to him. The *Altar* also was rent, and the *Ashes* poured out from it; according to the *Sign*, which the Man of God had given, by the Word of the Lord.

Which when the King saw, and withal felt himself deprived of the Use of his Hand, his stout Heart for the present relenting, he said unto the Man of God, Entreat now the Face of the Lord thy God, and pray for me, that my Hand may be restored me again. Whereupon the Man of God beseeching the Lord for him, the King's Hand was restored to him again, and became as it was before.

The King, sensible of so great a Benefit, invited the Man of God to go home with him, and refresh himself; offering withal to give him a Reward. But the Man of God refused: And without any Compliment, plainly told the King, If he would give him Half his House, he would not go in with him; neither would he Eat or Drink in that Place. For so (said he) was it charged me by the Word of the Lord, saying, Eat no Bread, nor drink Water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.

And accordingly the Man of God went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to *Beth-el*. Yet had he the Unhappiness to be betrayed, through his too easie Credulity; and was drawn into that Snare, to the Loss of his Life, by the false Insinuations of another, which the Kindness and Bounty of King *Jeroboam* had in vain tempted him unto. And thus it happened.

There dwelt, at that time, in *Beth-el*, an old Prophet, whose Sons, having been abroad, came home, and told their Father all that the Man of God had done and said at the *Altar*: Which when the old Prophet had heard, he enquired of them, which way the Man of God went; and calling for his Ass rode after him. And having found him sitting under an Oak, he invited him to go home with him, and eat Bread. The Man of God frankly told him what the Command of the Lord was to him and how strict a Charge he had received, not to eat or drink in that Place, nor to go back by the same way that he came. But the old Prophet told him, he was a Prophet as well as he; and that an Angel had spoken to him by the Word of the Lord, and had bidden

bidden him bring him back with him into his House, that he might eat
 1 Kin. 13. and drink : In which (alas !) he lyed unto him.

Thus the good Man, by giving heed to a *pretended Message* from an *Angel*, delivered to him at *Second Hand* by a *Man* (and that too one he knew not :) contrary to an *express Command* from *God himself*, given *immediately* to himself, and miraculously *confirmed* to him, suffered himself to be *mised*, to his own *Ruin*. For going back with the old *Prophet* to his House, the Word of the Lord came to the old *Prophet*, as they sate Eating and Drinking at the Table ; and he thereupon cried unto the Man of God that came from *Judah*, Thus saith the Lord, ' Forasmuch as thou hast *disobeyed* the *Mouth* of the Lord (the Word ' which thou hadst from his own Mouth) and hast not kept the Com- ' mandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee : But camest ' back, and hast eaten Bread and drunk Water in the Place, of which ' the Lord did say to thee, Eat no Bread, and drink no Water ' there ; thy dead Body shall not come unto the Sepulchre of thy Fa- ' thers.

This, we may conclude, was an *hard Sentence* to the Man of God : And the *harder*, for that it came from the Mouth of him, who had been the *mischievous Instrument*, to betray him into that *Guilt*, which had drawn this *Judgment* on him. But as it was a *Trial* to him, may he be a *Warning* to others !

Now after the Man of God had eaten and drank, and was going home-wards, a *Lion* met him by the way, and slew him, and his dead Body was cast in the way ; and the *Afs*, on which he rode, stood by it, and the *Lion* also : For the *Lion* did not eat the Bdy, nor tear the *Afs* ; which was an Argument that this was not an *accidental* thing, and that the *Lion* did not kill the Man for *Hunger*, since he did not prey upon the Body, nor upon the *Afs*.

The Report of this was soon brought, by Passengers that observed it, to the City whether old *Prophet* dwelt ; who no sooner heard it, but he said, *It is the Man of God, who was disobedient unto the Word of the Lord : Therefore the Lord hath delivered him unto the Lion, which hath slain him ; according to the Word of the Lord, which he spake unto him.* Then calling for his *Afs*, he rode to the Place, and finding the dead Body cast in the way, with the *Afs* and the *Lion* yet standing by ; he took up the *Body* of the Man of God, and laying it upon the *Afs*, brought it back to the City, that he might mourn over it, and bury it : And having laid the *Body* in his own *Grave*, he with his Family mourned over the Man of God, saying, *Alas, my Brother.* Then charging his Sons, he said, *When I am dead, bury me in the Sepulchre wherein the Man of God is buried, and lay my Bones beside his Bones : For the Saying which he cried, by the Word of the Lord, against the Altar in Beth-el, and against all the Houses of the High-places, which are in the Cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass.*

The latter part of this Sentence, viz. [*against all the Houses of the High-places which are in the Cities of Samaria,*] may be supposed to have been added by the *Compiler* of this Book of the Kings ; who herein speaks according to the time wherein he lived. For we read not in the Story before, ver. 1, 2, 3. That the Man of God cried against any other, either Place or Thing, but *that Altar at Beth-el*. Nor was the City *Samaria* built, when this was Transacted ; nor until *Omri*, having possessed himself of the *Israelitish Throne* (near *Fifty Years* after) bought the Hill *Samaria* of *Shemer*, for Two Talents of Silver, and having built the City on it, called it, after the Name of *Shemer*, *Shomeron*, or *Samaria*, 1 Kings 16. 24.

A thing so remarkable, and so publick, as was the Death of this Man of God, may not be supposed could be hid from King *Jeroboam*. ^{1 King. 13.} And very likely it is, that altho' *Jeroboam* at the first was startled, with the visible Sign of the Rending of his Altar, and the sensible Loss of the use of his Hand: Yet he quickly got over both: And strengthened himself the more in his Rebellion against God, when he understood what had befallen the Man, that had prophesied against his Altar. For it follows in the Text, *After this thing, Jeroboam returned not from his evil way; but made again, of the lowest of the People, Priests of the High-places: So that whosoever would, he consecrated him to be a Priest of those Places; and this thing became Sin unto the House of Jeroboam; not only to cut it off from the Kingdom, but even to destroy it from off the Face of the Earth.* And who knows but that, as after *Pharaoh* King of Egypt had wilfully hardened himself against God, the Lord suffered many things to befall him, for his further Obduration: So *Jeroboam* having knowingly and resolvedly rebelled against God, (in setting up his Calves, whereby he not only grievously sinned himself, but caused Israel also to sin) the Lord might suffer this to befall his Prophet; not only to be a general Warning to others, how they varied from the Command of the Lord; but for a *Stumbling-block* in particular to *Jeroboam*: As he afterward threatned a People, who by their Sins had highly provoked him, that he would lay *Stumbling-blocks* before them, Jer. 6. 21.

But if *Jeroboam* was very bad; *Rehoboam* was not very good. As ^{1 King.} *Nero*, the Roman Emperor, had his *Quinquennium*; a Five Years good ^{14.} Reign, before he degenerated so foully: So King *Rehoboam* had his ^{2 Chr. 12.} *Trienium*, a Three Years good Reign, (wherein he walked in the way of David, 2 Chron. 11. 17.) before he forsook the Lord. But after those Three Years were over, he and his People *Judah* did Evil in the Sight of the Lord, and provoked him to Jealousie with their Sins that they committed, above all that their Fathers had done. For they also built them *High-places* and *Images*, and *Groves* on every high Hill, and under every Green Tree: And there were *Sodomites* also in the Land; and they did according to all the *Abominations* of the Nations, which the Lord had cast out before the Children of Israel.

Wherefore the Lord chastised them by *Shishak* King of Egypt; who, in the Fifth Year of *Rehoboam*, came up against *Jerusalem*, with Twelve Hundred Chariots, and Threescore Thousand Horsemen, and an innumerable Company of People with him out of Egypt, the *Lubims*, the *Sukkims*, and the *Ethiopians*: And with this great Army, having taken the fenced Cities, which belonged to *Judah* and *Benjamin*, he marched to *Jerusalem*.

Then, when Fear had seized upon them, came *Shemaiah* the Prophet to *Rehoboam*, and to the Princes of *Judah*, who were gathered together because of *Shishak*; and this short Message he delivered to them. Thus saith the Lord, *Ye have forsaken me: And therefore have I also left you in the Hand of Shishak.*

When they heard this, both the Princes and the King, humbling themselves, said, *The Lord is Righteous.* And when the Lord saw that they humbled themselves, the Word of the Lord came to the Prophet *Shemaiah* again, saying, *They have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them: But I will grant them some Deliverance; and my Wrath shall not be poured (fully) out upon Jerusalem, by the Hand of Shishak. Nevertheless they shall be his Servants, that they may know the Difference between my Service, and the Service of the Kingdoms of the Countries.*

So the King of Egypt, entering *Jerusalem*, took away the Treasures of the House of the Lord (the Lord so permitting it) and the Treasures of the King's House, he even took away all: Carrying away also the Shields of Gold, which *Solomon* had made, *2 Chron.* 9. 15, 16. Instead of which, King *Rehoboam* afterwards made Shields of Brass; and committed them to the care of the chief of his Guards that kept the Entrance of the King's House: And when the King entred into the House of the Lord, the Guards came and fetcht the Shields; and brought them again into the Guard-chamber.

As this Depredation, by the Egyptian King, brought Heaviness upon *Judah*: So another Occasion offered, which brought Sorrow upon the *Israelitish* Court. For young *Abijah*, King *Jeroboam's* Son, a Prince of good hope, falling sick; the King his Father, willing to know of the Prophet *Abijah* what would become of the Child: Yet not willing the Prophet should know that it was his Child, desired his Wife to disguise her self, that it might not be known who she was, and so to go and enquire of the Prophet. Wherein he sufficiently shewed his Folly, in thinking the Prophet, as a Prophet, could tell what should become of the Child, and yet could not tell whose Child it was.

The Queen however, disguising her self, as her Husband had directed, and taking with her a Present for the Prophet, of Ten Loaves of Bread, some Wafer-Cakes, and a Cruse or Pot of Honey, went to *Shiloh*, to the House where the Prophet *Abijah* dwelt.

He, good Man, through extream Age, had lost his sight. But before she came in, the Lord had said unto him, Behold, the Wife of *Jeroboam* cometh to ask a Thing of thee for her Son, for he is sick: Thus and thus shalt thou say unto her; for she will feign her self to be another Woman.

When therefore *Abijah* heard the Sound of her Feet, as she came in at the Door, he said, Come in, thou Wife of *Jeroboam*: Why feignest thou thy self to be another? For I am sent to thee with heavy News. Then, without staying for her Message to him, he began his Message thus. Go, tell *Jeroboam*, Thus saith the Lord God of *Israel*, 'For as much as I exalted thee from among the People, and made thee Prince over my People *Israel*, and rent the Kingdom away from the House of *David*, and gave it to thee; and yet thou hast not been as my Servant *David*, who kept my Commandments, and who followed me with all his Heart, to do that only which was right in mine Eyes, but hast done Evil above all that were before thee (for thou hast gone and made thee other Gods, and molten Images, to provoke me to Anger, and hast cast me behind thy Back:) Therefore, behold, I will bring Evil upon the House of *Jeroboam*, and will cut off from *Jeroboam* him that pisseth against the Wall, and him that is shut up and left in *Israel*; and will take away the Remnant of the House of *Jeroboam*, as a Man taketh away Dung, till it be all gone. Him that dieth of *Jeroboam* in the City, shall the Dogs eat; and him that dieth in the Field, shall the Fowls of the Air eat: For the Lord hath spoken it. Arise thou therefore, Get thee to thine own House; and when thy Feet shall enter in, the Child shall die: And all *Israel* shall mourn for him and bury him, because in him there is found some good thing towards the Lord God of *Israel*, in the House of *Jeroboam*. Moreover, added he, the Lord will raise him up a King over *Israel*, who shall cut off the House of *Jeroboam* in that Day. Then stopping on a sudden (as it were correcting himself) he said, But what, even now. By those abrupt Speeches, signifying, that he needed not have spoken in the future Tense [the Lord will raise him up a King:] For he

was *even now* already in being, Then pursuing his former Subject, he added, ' For the Lord will smite *Israel* as a Reed is shaken in the Water ^{1 Kin. 14.} (that is, by continual Commotions in the Kingdom;) and he will root ^{2 Chr. 12.} up *Israel* out of this good Land, which he gave to their Fathers, and will scatter them beyond the River (*Euphrates*) because they have made their Groves, provoking the Lord to Anger: And he will give up *Israel*, because of the Sins of *Jeroboam*; who not only Sinned himself, but made *Israel* also to Sin.

With this *doleful* Message *Jeroboam's* Wife departing, returned to *Tirzah* (which was then the Royal City, before *Samaria* was built) and when she came to the Threshold of the Door, *the Child died*. And they buried him; and all *Israel* mourned for him, according to the Word of the Lord, which he spake by his Servant *Abijah* the Prophet.

As for *Rehoboam*, the King of *Judah*, tho' he lived Twelve Years after *Skishak*, King of *Egypt*, had sacked *Jerusalem*, and brought him into Subjection; yet we read not much of his *Publick* Acts afterwards. It is said indeed, *There were Wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually*, 2 *Chron.* 12. 15. But with what *Success*, is not mentioned. Of his Wives and Children there is mention, 2 *Chron.* 11. 18. and he seems to be an *Uxorious* Man: For he is said to have desired a *Multitude of Wives*, ver. 23. And it appears he took *Eighteen* Wives, and *Threescore* Concubines: And begat *Eight and Twenty* Sons and *Threescore* Daughters. And as of all his Wives and Concubines he loved *Maachab* best (who is also called *Michajah*, 2 *Chron.* 13. 2. and there said to be the Daughter of *Uriel* of *Gibeah*; but in 2 *Chron.* 11. 21. she is called the Daughter of *Abshalom*, as in 1 *Kings* 15. 2. the Daughter of *Abishalom*, from which, by *Contraction*, is drawn *Abshalom*; not the rebellious Son of *David*, whose Issue failed, 2 *Sam.* 18. 18. but another of *Gibeah* in *Benjamin*, who is supposed to be the Father of *Uriel*, and so *Maachab* to be Grand-daughter of this *Abishalom* or *Abshalom*;) So of all his Sons, he made *Abijah* (called also *Abijam*, 1 *Kings* 14. 31.) whom he had by his beloved Wife *Maachab*, chief; preferring him to be *Ruler* among his Brethren, as designing him for his *Successor* in the Kingdom, 2 *Chron.* 11. 21, 22.

And tho', from his *ill-advised* Answer to his People, at his coming to the *Crown* (whereby he lost *Ten Parts* out of *Twelve* of his Kingdom) he is in common Speech, branded with *Folly*: Yet, with Respect to his *Administration*, after he was settled in the Government, he is said to have *dealt wisely*, ver. 23. However in the *Seventeenth* Year of his Reign, which was the *Eight and Fiftieth* Year of his Age, he slept with his Fathers, and was buried in the City of *David* and *Abijah* his Son reigned in his stead.

It was in the *Eighteenth* Year of *Jeroboam* King of *Israel*, that *Abijah* began to reign over *Judah*. And tho' his Reign was but *short* (for he reigned but *Three* Years;) Yet he did more than his Father had done in his longer Reign of *Seventeen* Years. For resolving to give *Battel* to *Jeroboam*, he led forth an Army of valiant Men of War, consisting of Four Hundred Thousand fighting Men.

Jeroboam too, as he had a larger Kingdom, intending to overpower him with Numbers, drew up an Army against him, of Eight Hundred Thousand chosen Men, being mighty Men of Valour.

Abijah, nothing daunted at the double Number of his Enemies Forces; when the *Battel* was set in array on both Sides, standing up upon Mount *Zemeraim*, which is in Mount *Ephraim*, thus bespake the *adverse* Army.

' Hear

1 Kings 15. 2 Chr. 13. ' Hear me, thou *Jeroboam*, and all *Israel*. Ought ye not to know, that
 ' the Lord God of *Israel* gave the Kingdom over *Israel* to *David* for ever;
 ' even to him, and to his Sons, by a Covenant of *Salt* (which as the
 ' Property of it is to *preserve* Things from *Putrefaction*, is an *Emblem* of
 ' *Duration* and *Stability*?) Yet *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*, the Servant
 ' of *Solomon* the Son of *David*, is risen up, and hath rebelled against his
 ' Lord. And there are gathered unto him *vain Men*, the Children of
 ' *Belial*, and have strengthened themselves against *Rehoboam* the Son
 ' of *Solomon*, when *Rehoboam* was but young (in the Government) and
 ' tender-hearted, and could not withstand them. And now ye think
 ' to withstand the Kingdom of the Lord, in the Hand of the Sons of
 ' *David*; and ye be a great Multitude: And there are with you
 ' *golden Calves*, which *Jeroboam* made for Gods. Have ye not cast
 ' out the *Priests* of the Lord, and the *Levites*; and have made you
 ' *Priests* after the manner of the People of other Lands? So that who-
 ' soever cometh to Consecrate himself with a young Bullock and Se-
 ' ven Rams, (*a way of your own devising*) the same may be *Priest* to
 ' them that are no Gods. But as for us, the Lord is our God; and we
 ' have not forsaken him: And the *Priests*, which minister unto the
 ' Lord, are the Sons of *Aaron*; and the *Levites* wait upon their
 ' Business. And they burn unto the Lord, every Morning and every
 ' Evening, Burnt-Sacrifices, and Sweet Incense; the Shew-bread also
 ' they set in order upon the pure Table, and the Candlestick of Gold,
 ' with the Lamps thereof, to burn every Evening: For we keep the
 ' Charge of the Lord our God; but ye have forsaken him. And be-
 ' hold, God himself is with us for our *Captain*; and his *Priests*, with
 ' sounding Trumpets, are ready to cry *Alarm* against you. Wherefore,
 ' O Children of *Israel*, fight ye not against the Lord God of your
 ' Fathers: For ye shall not prosper.

While thus *Abijah* was Expostulating with the *Israelitish* Army, *Je-
 roboam*, more mindful how he might, by adding *Policy* to *Force*, obtain
 the more full and easie Victory, caused a part of his Army to *fetch a
 Compass*, and place themselves in *Ambush* behind *Judah*. So that when
Abijah had ended his *Oration*, the Men of *Judah*, looking back, found
 themselves enclosed by their Enemies; Battel being both before and be-
 hind them.

In this *streight*, they cried unto the Lord; and the *Priests* sounded
 with the Trumpets. Then gave the Men of *Judah* a *Shout*; and God,
 regarding the Cry of *Judah*, smote *Jeroboam* and all *Israel* before *Abijah*
 and *Judah*. Whereupon the Children of *Israel* fled before *Judah*; and
 God having delivered them into their Hand, *Abijah* and his People
 slew them with a very great Slaughter: So that there fell down slain of
Israel Five Hundred Thousand chosen Men.

Very memorable was this *Battel*, and may well be reckoned for one
 of the *Battels* of the Lord: Wherein Four Hundred Thousand Men,
 under the *Disadvantage* of an *Ambush*, put Eight Hundred Thousand
 valiant Men to flight; and slew Five Hundred Thousand of them up-
 on the Place.

Thus the Children of *Israel*, who were wholly fallen away to gross
 Idolatry, were brought under at that time; and the Children of *Judah*
 (tho' not so good as they should have been, yet *comparatively* good, as
 being *better* than *Israel*) prevailed: Because they (at this time, at least)
 relied upon the Lord God of their Fathers.

The Battel being over, *Abijah*, that he might improve his Victory, pur-
 sued after *Jeroboam*, and took from him divers considerable Cities with
 the Towns and Territories belonging to them; of which *Beth-el* was one,
 where

where *Jeroboam* had set up one of his Calf-Idols: By which means *Jeroboam* was so weakened, that he never recovered Strength again in the Days of *Abijah*. 1 Kin. 15.
2 Chr. 13.

But *Abijah* grew very Great, and having enlarged his Family, by marrying *Fourteen* Wives, and begetting *Two* and *Twenty* Sons, and *Sixteen* Daughters, he slept with his Fathers (which is a *Periphrasis* of Dying) and was buried in the City of *David*. The rest of his Acts, and his Ways and Sayings, were recorded in the *Commentaries* of *Iddo* the Prophet; a Book long since lost.

To *Abijah* succeeded his Son *Asha* in the Kingdom of *Judah*, in the Twentieth Year of the Reign of *Jeroboam* over *Israel*. And because his Heart was perfect with the Lord, and he did that which was right and good in the Eyes of the Lord his God, he had a peaceable Entry to his Throne; and the Land was quiet for the First *Ten* Years of his Reign, that he might reform the Abuses which had been brought under the former Reigns. Accordingly applying himself to the Work, he first removed the *Sodomites* out of the Land. Then he took away the *Altars* of the strange Gods, and the *High-places* (as far as he could) and brake down the *Images*, and cut down the *Groves*, throughout all the Cities of *Judah*. And because *Maachab*, his Mother, had made an *Idol* in a *Grove*; he not only destroyed her *Idol*, but removed her from being *Queen*. And having brought into the House of the Lord the Holy Things, which his Father and himself had Dedicated; (Vessels of Silver and of Gold) he commanded *Judah* to seek the Lord God of their Fathers, and to keep the *Law*. A. M.
3050.
2 Chr. 14.

In this time also of Peace and Tranquility, he builded Cities in *Judah*; which he fenced with *Walls* and *Towers*, and with *Gates* and *Bars*, for the Strength and Security of his Kingdom.

But after this *Ten* Years time of Quiet, a *Storm* rose upon *Judah*: For *Zerah*, the *Ethiopian* King, came forth against them with a mighty Host. *Asha* was not unprovided; but had a considerable Army in readiness, of Five Hundred and Fourscore Thousand valiant fighting Men, well armed; which he led forth against the *Ethiopians*. But *Zerah's* Host was well nigh double the Number: For it consisted of a Thousand Thousand fighting Men; besides Three Hundred Chariots. King *Asha*, seeing himself so much over-matched in Numbers, betook himself to the Lord his God for help: And in an humble Confidence crying unto him, said, 'Lord, It is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no Power. Help us, O Lord our God: For we rely on thee, and in thy Name we go against this Multitude. O Lord, thou art our God: Let no Man prevail against thee. A. M.
3060.

So acceptable was this short, but hearty Prayer of *Asha's* to the Lord, that he thereupon smote the *Ethiopians*, and caused them to fly before *Asha* and *Judah*, who pursued them even to *Gerar* (which signifies a *Striving*:) where they received so great an *Overthrow*, that they could not recover themselves. Wherefore *Asha* and his People smote all the Cities round about *Gerar* (the Lord having struck a Terror into them) and when they had taken the Spoils of the Cities (which afforded them great store of Plunder, and the Spoil of their Enemies Host; they smote also the Tents of them that kept Cattel: And carrying away *Sheep* and *Camels* in abundance, they returned to *Jerusalem*.

But the Spirit of the Lord coming upon *Azariah*, the Son of *Oded* (whom some take to be the same with the Prophet *Iddo*, mentioned before, Ch. 13. 22.) he went out to meet *Asha*, and said unto him, 'Hear ye me *Asha*, and all *Judah* and *Benjamin*, The Lord is with you, while ye are with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you (as ye have

‘ have had Experience in this Expedition :) But, notwithstanding that,
 1 Kings ‘ If ye forsake him, he will forsake you. Now, for a long Season,
 15. ‘ Israel hath been without the true God, and without a Teaching-Priest,
 2 Chr. 15. ‘ and without Law. And in those times there was no Safety, either in
 ‘ going out, or coming in ; but great Vexations were upon all the Inhabi-
 ‘ tants of the Countries, and Nation was destroyed of Nation, and
 ‘ City of City : For God did vex them with all Adversity. But when
 ‘ in their Trouble, they did turn unto the Lord God of Israel, and
 ‘ fought him, he was found of them. Be ye strong therefore ; and let not
 ‘ your Hands be weak : For your Work shall be Rewarded.

When *Asa* had heard these Words, and the Prophecy also of *Oded* the Prophet (or rather, perhaps, of *Abijah* the Prophet, mentioned in 1 Kings 14. from ver. 7. to 17. and Recorded by *Oded* ; which it is probable *Azariah* might then shew him) he took Courage, and put away the rest of the abominable Idols out of all the Land of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, and out of the Cities which he had taken from Mount *Ephraim* ; and having renewed the Altar of the Lord, which was before the Porch of the Lord’s House, he gathered together all *Judah* and *Benjamin*, and the Strangers with them, out of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, and out of *Simcon*, (for so they are called, who out of the other Tribes fell to him ; and they fell to him out of *Israel* in abundance, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him.) And being thus assembled at *Jerusalem* in the Third Month (in which the Feast of Weeks, or of Harvest, commanded by God, *Exod.* 23. 16. and *Deut.* 16. 16. happened to fall) in the Fifteenth Year of the Reign of *Asa*, they offered unto the Lord, of the Spoil which they had brought, Seven Hundred Oxen, and Seven Thousand Sheep : And at the same time entered into a Covenant, that they would seek the Lord God of their Fathers with all their Heart and Soul ; so that whosoever (whether small or great, Man or Woman) would not seek the Lord God of *Israel*, should be put to Death. This Covenant they confirmed by Oath unto the Lord ; which they took so cheerfully and heartily, that the Lord accepted their Service therein, and gave them Rest round about.

But while things thus mended in *Judah*, some considerable Changes happened among the *Israelites*. For *Feroboam* did not long survive the Overthrow he had received from *Abijah* : But being smitten of God, he died, in the First or Second Year of *Asa* King of *Judah*. And *Nadab* his Son, who succeeded him, both in his Kingdom and in his Sins, had scarce compleated Two Years Reign, when *Baasha*, of the House of *Issachar*, conspiring against him, slew him at the Siege of *Gibbethon* ; a Town belonging to the *Danites*, but held then by the *Philistines*.

Baasha, by this means possessing himself of the *Israelitish* Throne, smote all the House of *Feroboam*, until he had utterly destroyed him, not leaving one of his Family alive ; to the fulfilling the Saying of the Lord, which he spake by his Servant *Abijah* the *Shilonite* : Because of the Sins of *Feroboam*, which he sinned, and which he made *Israel* sin by his Provocation ; wherewith he provoked the Lord God of *Israel* to Anger.

But tho’ *Baasha* thus severely executed the just Judgment of God upon *Feroboam*’s House : Yet he himself departed not from *Feroboam*’s Sins, but did Evil in the Sight of the Lord, walking in the way of *Feroboam*, and in his Sin, wherewith he made *Israel* to Sin. For as *Feroboam* set up his Idol-Calves at first, to keep the *Israelites* his Subjects from going up to worship at *Jerusalem* (whither God had commanded them to go) lest he should thereby lose his People and Kingdom : So *Baasha*, observing his Subjects out of all parts of *Israel*, fell in great Numbers

Numbers to *Afa* King of *Judah*, when they saw the Lord his God was with him, and that he had begun a good Work of Reformation, went up ^{1 Kin. 15.} with his Forces against *Judah*, and built *Ramah*; to the intent, that he ^{2 Chr. 16.} might let none (any more) go out or come in to *Afa* King of *Judah*.

Afa, not thinking himself strong enough to encounter *Baasha*, took all the Silver and Gold that was left in the Treasures of the House of the Lord, and the Treasures of his own House also, and sending them for a Present to *Benhadad* King of *Syria* (whose Seat was then at *Damascus*) put him in mind, by his *Ambassadors*, of the League that had anciently been between them and their Fathers; requesting him to break his League with *Baasha*, and cause him to give over his Enterprize, and to depart from him.

Benhadad, tempted with so rich a Present, sent his Armies against the Cities of *Israel*, and smote divers of them. Which when *Baasha* heard of, he left building *Ramah*, and returned to *Tirzah*, his Royal City (for *Samaria* was not yet built) that he might take care of his own Affairs. And as soon as *Baasha* was gone with his Forces, *Afa*, by Proclamation, calling in all *Judah* to the Work, pulled down the Building which *Baasha* had set up at *Ramah*, and carrying away the Stones and Timber thereof, did therewith build Two Cities for himself, *Geba* of *Benjamin*, and *Mizpah*.

But while King *Afa* was thus employed, *Hanani* the Seer, came unto ^{1 Kings} him, and said, Because thou hast relied on the King of *Syria*, and not on ^{16.} the Lord thy God, therefore is the Host of the King of *Syria* escaped ^{2 Chr. 16.} out of thy Hand; that is, have withdrawn themselves, and left thee open to thy Enemy, and destitute of help, if he should assault thee again. Then reminding him of the great Deliverance, God had formerly given him from *Zerah* the *Ethiopian* King, he put him to consider how great an Host the *Ethiopians* and *Lubims* were, (much greater than that of *Baasha*, which he was so afraid of) and yet, because he then relied on the Lord, the Lord delivered them into his Hands. For *the Eyes of the Lord* (said the Prophet) *run to and fro throughout the whole Earth, that he may shew himself strong in the behalf of them, whose Heart is perfect towards him.* Then for a Conclusion, tells him plainly and bluntly, *Herein thou hast done foolishly: Therefore from henceforth thou shalt have Wars.*

This plain-dealing, tho' from a Man of God, King *Afa*, as good as he was, could not brook; but being wroth with the Seer, put him into Prison: For he was in a Rage with him, because of this Thing. And whether the People took the Seer's part, or for what other Reason is uncertain; but it seems, *The King oppressed some of the People the same time.*

Better Treatment had *Jehu*, the Son of this *Hanani* the Seer, from *Baasha* King of *Israel*, unto whom the Lord sent him, to denounce his Judgment in these Terms.

' Forasmuch as I exalted thee out of the Dust, and made thee Prince
' over my People *Israel*, and thou hast walked in the way of *Jeroboam*,
' and hast made my People *Israel* to sin, and to provoke me to Anger
' with their Sins: Behold, I will take away the Posterity of *Baasha*,
' and the Posterity of his House; and will make thy House like the
' House of *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*. Him that dieth of *Baasha*, in
' the City, shall the Dogs eat: And him that dieth of his in the
' Fields, shall the Fowls of the Air eat.

This was sharp and home: Yet we do not read that *Baasha* fell foul on the Prophet, for delivering to him this dreadful Doom.

So little Agreement is there of *Chronology* in the Reigns of these
^{1 Kin. 16.} Kings, and some others, after the Division of the Kingdom; that I will
^{2 Chr. 16.} not pretend to give an *exact* Account thereof: Especially since the *Clue*
 I have hitherto mostly followed, doth here, as in some other Places,
 fail me.

Probable it is, that *Baasha* did not live long after the Judgment,
 mentioned before, was delivered to him by the Man of God. He is
 said to have slept with his Father's, and *Elah* his Son to have succeed-
 ed him in the Six and Twentieth Year of *Asa* King of *Judah*, ^{1 Kings}
^{16. ver. 6. and 8.} Yet *Baasha's* Expedition against *Asa*, in order to build
Ramah, is said to be in the Six and Thirtieth Year of the Reign of *Asa*,
^{2 Chron. 16. 1.}

Some I know (as *Tremellius* and *Junius*) to reconcile this Difference,
 would have that Six and Thirtieth Year to relate (not to *Asa's* Reign,
 but) to the Date of the Kingdom of *Judah*, from the Division of the
 Kingdom of *Israel*, at *Rehoboam's* coming to the Crown; and to be
 but the Fourteenth Year of the Reign of *Asa*. But I see not how that can
 be; since this Expedition of *Baasha*, for the building of *Ramah*, was some
 time after *Asa* had defeated the *Ethiopian* King: For *Hanani* the Seer
 upbraided *Asa* with having forgotten the Deliverance God had given
 him from the *Ethiopians*, when he craved Help of the *Syrians* against
Baasha. And yet that Defeat of the *Ethiopians*, or at least, the Covenant
 for Reformation, which thereupon *Judah* entered into, is expressly placed
 in the Third Month of the Fifteenth Year of King *Asa's* Reign. So
 that that Six and Thirtieth Year, in which *Baasha* is said to go up to
 build *Ramah* (and which seems to have been a good while after the
 Reformation-Covenant, made in *Asa's* Fifteenth Year; for upon the
 making of that Covenant, the Lord gave them Rest round about, ^{2 Chron.}
^{15. 15.}) can by no good Computation be made to be the Fourteenth Year
 of *Asa's* Reign. I conjecture therefore that this Difference has been oc-
 casion'd thro' a Slip of some Transcriber's Pen. But leaving others to
 their own Conjectures also: Having given this Hint, to secure my self
 from the Reader's Censure in point of *Chronology*, too difficult in these
 times to be made exactly out, I resume the Thread of the Story.

Baasha dying in the Six and Twentieth Year of the Reign of King *Asa*,
Elah his Son succeeded him, and reigned over *Israel* Two Years, or rather,
 part of Two Years: For in his Second Year, he being in *Tirzah*, drink-
 ing himself drunk, in the House of *Arza* his Steward; his Servant
Zimri, Captain of half his Chariots, having conspired against him,
 went in and killed him, in the Seven and Twentieth Year of *Asa*:
 And reigned in his stead.

And altho' his Reign was very short (for he reigned but Seven
 Days) yet in that short time, and as soon as he sat on his Throne, as
 if he had been raised for nothing else, but to execute the Judgment
 of the Lord, denounced by the Prophet *Jehu*, against the House of *Baasha*,
 he slew all the Family of *Baasha*, not leaving him one alive, either of
 his Kinsfolks or Friends.

Mean while the Army being encamped against *Gibbethon* (then held
 from *Israel* by the *Philistines*) and hearing there that *Zimri* had not only
 conspired against, but also slain *Elah* their King, they made *Omri*, the
 Captain of the Host, King over *Israel* that Day in the Camp.

^{A. M.}
^{3075.} *Omri* thereupon raising his Siege from before *Gibbethon*, led his
 Army up to *Tirzah*, the Royal City; and there besieged *Zimri*: Who
 not able to defend the Place, when he saw the City was taken, went
 into the Royal Palace; and setting it on Fire, burnt both it, and him-
 self in it, and so died.

Then

Then were the People of *Israel* divided into Two Parts: Half the People following *Tibni* the Son of *Ginath*, to make him King; and the other Half following *Omri*. But *Omri's* Party in time prevailing; *Tibni* died, and *Omri* reigned. 1 Kin. 16.

He is said to have begun his Reign over *Israel*, in the One and Thirtieth Year of *Afa* King of *Judah*; and to have reigned Twelve Years: And his Son *Abab* to have succeeded him, in the Eight and thirtieth Year of *Afa*. Which cannot be, unless *Omri's* Twelve Years be computed from *Elab's* Death, and take in the time wherein *Tibni* and *Omri* were Competitors for the Crown, which is supposed to have been Four Years: And on that Reckoning it will come near the matter.

However, *Omri* wrought Evil in the Eyes of the Lord, and did worse than all that had been before him, For he not only walked in all the ways of *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*, and in his Sin wherewith he made *Israel* to sin, to provoke the Lord God of *Israel* to anger, with their Vanities: But he made Laws (called long after the Statutes of *Omri*) to bind the People thereunto, as appears from the Words of the Prophet *Micah*, Ch. 6. 16.

As for his publick Acts, tho' it is probable there might be some that were remarkable, because we are here referr'd to the Book of the *Chronicles* of the Kings of *Israel* for them, and for his *Might* which he shewed: Yet there being no mention of his Acts, or of his *Might*, in the Books of the *Chronicles* now extant, we can give no further Account of him, save that he bought the Hill *Samaria* of *Shemer*, for Two Talents of Silver (valuing Seven Hundred and Fifty Pounds Sterling,) and thereon built the City, which from *Shemer*, he called *Samaria*; and which was afterwards the Metropolis, and Royal Seat of the *Israelitish* Kingdom.

To him succeeded *Abab* his Son (in the Eight and Thirtieth Year of *Afa* King of *Judah*) who reigning Two and Twenty Years over *Israel* in *Samaria*, did so far outstrip his Father in Wickedness, that he is said to have done Evil in the Sight of the Lord, above all that were before him; and to have provoked the Lord God of *Israel* to anger, more than all the Kings of *Israel*, that went before him, had done. For as if it had been a light thing, for him to walk in the Sins of *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*; he took to Wife *Jezebel*, the Daughter of *Eth-baal* King of the *Zidonians*: And having thereupon built an House for *Baal* in *Samaria*, and reared up an Altar to *Baal* therein, he served *Baal* and worshipped him; and made a Grove for Idols.

By these Abominations highly provoked, the Lord sent *Elijah* the *Tishbite* (who is also called *Elias*, Luke 4. 25.) to denounce a Judgment against *Israel*. Who coming unto *Abab*, said, As the Lord God of *Israel* liveth, before whom I stand (that is, whom I wait upon, or whose Servant I am) there shall not be either Rain or Dew these Years, (to wit, Three Years and Six Months: For so, both our Saviour, in Luke 4. 25. and the Apostle *James*, Chap. 5. 17. bound the time) but according to my Word, that is, as the Lord shall speak by me. 1 Kin. 17.

After the Prophet had delivered this Message that he might himself be out of the reach of the *Famine*, which this Drought may produce, and out of the reach of the wrathful King; the Word of the Lord came to him again, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee Eastward, and hide thyself by the Brook *Cherith*, which is before *Jordan*: Of which Brook thou shalt drink; and I have commanded the Ravens to feed thee there.

Thither therefore went *Elijah*, as the Lord had appointed him; and taking up his Abode by the Brook, the Ravens brought him Bread and Flesh Morning and Evening, and he drank of the Brook: But it came to

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pass

A. M.
3087.

pass after a while, that the *Brook dried up*, because there had been no
 1 *Kin. 17.* Rain in the Land.

Then came the Word of the Lord to him again, saying, *Get thee to Zarephath (called Sarepta, Luke 4. 26.) a Town belonging to Zidon, and dwell there: For I have commanded a Widow-woman there to sustain thee.* So he arose, and went to Zarephath, and coming to the Gate of the City, saw the Widow-woman there, gathering of Sticks: And calling to her, he desired her to fetch him a little Water, that he might drink.

As she was going to fetch it, he called to her again, desiring her to bring a *Morsel of Bread* in her Hand. Whereupon she answered, *As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not so much as a Cake; but an handful only of Meal in a Barrel, and a little Oyl in a Cruse: And behold, I am gathering a few sticks, that I may go in, and dress it for me and my Son, that we may eat it; and then I expect no other but to die for want of more Food.*

Then said *Elijah* to her, *Fear not; Go, and do as thou hast said: But make me thereof a little Cake first, and bring it unto me; and afterwards make for thee and thy Son.* For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, *The Barrel of Meal shall not waste, neither shall the Cruse of Oyl fail, until the Day that the Lord shall send Rain upon the Earth.*

The poor Woman, whose Heart the Lord had, before disposed to receive the Prophet (tho' she knew him not) made no dispute, but did according as he bid her; and she, and he, and her Family, did eat (of this little Store) many Days: For *the Barrel of Meal wasted not, neither did the Cruse of Oyl fail; but held out, according to the Word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.*

A. M.
3096. But tho' this Woman, and her Son, for her Care of the Prophet, were preserved alive from the *Famine*: Yet after this, and while the Prophet yet tarried with her, it came to pass that the *Woman's Son fell Sick; and his Sickness was so sore, that there was no Breath left in him, which is a Periphrasis of Dying.* Whereupon the sorrowful Mother coming to *Elijah*, said, *What have I to do with thee, O thou Man of God? Art thou come unto me, to call my Sin to remembrance, and to slay my Son?*

Elijah thereupon wisht her to give him her Son; and withal took him out of her Bosom: And carrying him up into the Chamber where he used to lie, he laid him down upon his own Bed; and crying unto the Lord, said, *O Lord my God, hast thou also brought Evil upon the Widow, with whom I sojourn, by slaying her Son?* Then stretching himself upon the Child Three times, he still cryed unto the Lord, saying, *O Lord my God, I pray thee, Let this Child's Soul come into him again.* And the Lord was graciously pleased to hear the Voice of his Servant *Elijah*; so that the Soul of the Child came into him again, and he revived. Then took *Elijah* the Child, and brought him down out of the Chamber into the House, and delivering him to his Mother, said, *See thy Child is alive.* At which the joyful Mother said, *Now by this I know thou art a Man of God; and that the Word of the Lord in thy Mouth is Truth.*

1 *Kin. 17.* When now the time was near expired, which God had appointed for the Drought to last, the Word of the Lord came to *Elijah*, saying, *Go, shew thy self unto Ahab; and I will send Rain upon the Earth.* Whereupon *Elijah* set forward, to go unto *Ahab*. But in the mean while, the *Famine* raging sorely throughout Israel, *Ahab* calling to him *Obadiab*, the Governor of his House (a Man that greatly feared the Lord, and shewed it by preserving the Lord's Prophets, when *Jezebel* cut many of them off:) he said unto him, *Let us go through the Land,*

unto

unto all Fountains of Water, and unto all Brooks; to see if we can find Grass, to save the Horses and Mules alive, that we lose not all the Beasts. Kin. 18.

Dividing thereupon the Land between them, with intention to search it thoroughly, Ahab (the King, without Guard, or Attendance) went one way by himself; and Obadiah went another way by himself. And Providence so disposing, it fell out, that as Obadiah was on his way, Elijah met him; and Obadiah knowing him, fell on his Face, and with Joy said, *Art thou that my Lord Elijah?* I am, replied he: And therefore go tell thy Lord, that *Elijah is here.*

Alas! said Obadiah, what great Offence have I committed, that thou shouldest deliver thy Servant into the Hand of Ahab to slay me? As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no Nation or Kingdom (that is subject to, or in League with Israel) whither the King hath not sent to seek thee: And when they said he is not there; he took an Oath of the Kingdom or Nation, that they found thee not. And now thou sayest, Go tell thy Lord, Behold, *Elijah is here.* Whereas, it may so come to pass, that as soon as I am gone from thee, the Spirit of the Lord may carry thee I know not whither: And then, if I should go and tell Ahab thou art here, and he cannot find thee, he will slay me. But I hope I have not deserved so ill of thee: For I thy Servant fear the Lord, and have done so from my Youth. Hath it not been told my Lord what I did, when Jezebel slew the Prophets of the Lord? How I hid an Hundred of the Lord's Prophets, by Fifty in a Cave, and provided them Food? And yet now thou sayest, Go tell thy Lord that *Elijah is here;* and so he may slay me. Nay, replied Elijah, don't fear that: For as the Lord of Hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely shew my self unto him to Day.

With this Assurance away went Obadiah, to find King Ahab; whom having found, and told him that *Elijah* was come, he hastened to meet *Elijah*: And as soon as he was come to him, saluted him with this rough Greeting, *Art thou he that troubleth Israel?* The Prophet, not behind with him, bluntly answered, *No: I have not troubled Israel: But thou and thy Father's House; in that ye have forsaken the Commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim.* Now therefore (added he) that it may appear who has been the Troublers of Israel, send, and gather to me all Israel unto Mount Carmel; and the Prophets of Baal, Four Hundred and Fifty, with the Four Hundred Prophets of the Groves, which feed at Jezebel's Table.

Accordingly Ahab summoned the Children of Israel, and with them the Prophets (at least, those of Baal) to assemble at Mount Carmel. And there *Elijah* coming among them, said to the People, *How long halt ye between Two Opinions?* If, upon the Tryal now to be made, it shall appear to you that the Lord is God, follow him: But if Baal, then follow him. But the Doubtful People answered him not a word.

A. M.
3097.

Then said *Elijah* to them, I, even I only (that I know of) remain a Prophet: But the Prophets of Baal: (besides the Four Hundred Prophets of the Groves, who perhaps were not come) are Four Hundred and Fifty Men. Let there therefore, for the deciding of this Controversy, be Two Bullocks given us; and let them choose out one of the Two Bullocks, for themselves: And let them cut it in pieces, and lay it on Wood, but put no Fire under. And I will dress the other Bullock, and lay it on Wood; and put no Fire under neither. And call ye (said he) turning to Baal's Prophets) on the Name of your Gods; and I will call on the Name of the Lord: And the God that answereth by Fire, let him be God.

This Proposition so pleased the People, that they said *It is well spoken.* Come then, said *Elijah* to the Prophets of Baal, seeing ye are many, do ye

^{1 Kin. 18.} ye begin. Choose ye one of the *Bullocks* for your selves, and dress it; and call on the Name of your Gods: But put no Fire under.

The Prophets, thus provoked, took their *Bullock* and dress'd it, and called on the Name of *Baal* from Morning even until Noon, saying, *Baal* hear us. But there was no *Voice*; nor any that answered. Whereupon they leaped either upon the Altar, or up and down at or about the Altar that was made.

When they had thus toiled themselves till Noon, *Elijah* (not in a *light Spirit*, but in an *Holy Zeal* against their *Idolatry*, and *Contempt* of their *Idol*, and the more effectually to expose them to the People) mocked them, and bid them Cry aloud: For, said he, your God is such a God, as is either talking, and so doth not heed you; or he is in an hot Pursuit, or in a Journey, and so cannot mind you; or (which is worse) perhaps he is fast asleep, and must with loud Calling be awaked, before he can hear you.

Whether those dozy Prophets were sensible that *Elijah* did deride them, or no; yet they stretched their Throats, and cried aloud: And when they found that did not avail, they cut themselves, after their manner, with Knives and Lancets, till the Blood gushed out upon them. This was the manner of the Heathen anciently, to express extream Sorrow, which God had expressly forbidden his People to imitate, *Levit. 19. 28.* and *Deut. 14. 1.*

Having thus gone on, in a sort of *Prophetick Fury*, from mid-day to the time of offering the Evening-Sacrifice; and there being no *Voice*, nor Answer given them, nor any Appearance that they were regarded; *Elijah* then invited all the People to come near unto him; which they did.

Then, that he might repair the Altar of the Lord, which was broken down (and thereby give the People a fair Invitation, by re-uniting themselves to their Brethren of *Judah*, to repair the Breach long since made in the Tribes of *Israel*) he took Twelve Stones, according to the Number of the Tribes of the Sons of *Jacob*, to whom the Word of the Lord came, saying, *Israel* (a Prevailer with God) shall be thy Name (intimating thereby the Faith and firm Confidence he had, that he should, at this time, and in this great Tryal, prevail with the Lord; and through his Powerful help, should prevail over his and their Enemies, the Prophets of *Baal*: He therewith built an Altar in the Name of the Lord; and made a fair Trench about it. And having put the Wood in order, and cut the Bullock in pieces, and laid it on the Wood, he gave Order that Four Barrels of Water should be poured upon the Sacrifice and the Wood. Which being done, he caused it to be repeated a Second and Third time, until the Water ran about the Altar: And then he filled the Trench also with Water. The Intention of which seems to be, that he might prevent all suspicion of Collusion; and render the expected Miracle more conspicuous and incontestable, when they should see a Fire break forth and burn, contrary to its Nature, in the midst of Water.

All things thus disposed in a due order, and the time of the Offering of the Evening-Sacrifice being come, *Elijah* the Prophet drew near; and addressing himself by Prayer to God, said, 'O Lord God of *Abraham*, of *Isaac*, and of *Israel*, Let it be known this Day, that thou art God in *Israel*, and that I thy Servant have done all these things at thy Word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me; that this People may know that thou art the Lord God: And that their Heart may be turned back again, from their Idols unto thee.

No sooner had the Prophet, in the Strength of Faith, and Fervency of his Spirit, poured forth his *Supplication* to the Lord; but the Fire: *1 Kin. 18.* of the Lord fell, and consumed, not the Burnt-sacrifice only and the Wood, but the very *Stones* and the *Dust*: Licking up also the *Water* that was in the *Trench*. At Sight whereof, the People, falling on their Faces, brake forth into *Admiration* and *Acknowledgment*, saying, *The Lord he is the God: The Lord he is the God.*

Elijah had a watchful Eye on the *false Prophets* (who, it seems, were providing to *shift for themselves*;) And not willing to slip this Opportunity, of freeing *Israel* from so many wicked Instruments, he called out to the People, to *apprehend the Prophets of Baal*. Which being done, he brought them down to the *Brook Kishon*, and slew them (that is, caused them to be slain) there. This Act of his, tho' it carried in it a shew of *great Severity*, was yet pursuant to the Law of God, *Deut. 13. 6. to 12. suited to that Dispensation*: Besides that it did *typically* set forth, how the *inward Enemies* of the Soul should be dealt with.

Then turning himself to King *Ahab*, he advised him to get up, and to eat and drink to refresh himself; (not sparing any longer, as before, for fear the Provision should not hold out:) For, said he, *there is a sound of abundance of Rain.*

But while *Ahab* was eating and drinking, *Elijah* going up to the top of *Carmel*, cast himself down on the Earth; and putting his Face between his Knees, bid his Servant go up, and look towards the Sea. The Servant went up and looked; and returning told him he *saw nothing*. Whereupon he bid him go again *Seven times*. The Servant did so: And at the *Seventh* time said, *Behold, there ariseth a little Cloud out of the Sea like a Man's Hand*. The Prophet thereupon bid him go, and say unto *Ahab*, *Prepare thy Chariot and get thee down, that the Rain stop thee not*. *Ahab* perceiving the Sky overcast, so that the Heaven was grown *black* with Clouds and Wind, hastened away to *Jezreel*: And there was a great Rain. Yet the Hand of the Lord, (that is, his Power) was on *Elijah*, strengthening him so, that girding up his Loins (whereby he tucked up his long Garment, which would otherwise have been an hindrance to him) he ran before *Ahab* to the Entrance of *Jezreel*.

Being got thither, the King quickly related to *Jezebel* his Queen, all that *Elijah* had done; and particularly how he had *slain* all the Prophets. At which the *revengeful Queen* was so enraged, that by a Messenger sent on purpose, she said to *Elijah*, *So let the Gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy Life as the Life of one of them, by to morrow this time.* *1 Kin. 19.*

When *Elijah* had received this *menacing Message*, considering with himself the *vindictive Nature* of the Queen, and the Power she had with the King her Husband; he thought it his Duty, having performed the Service he came for, to provide in time for his own Safety. Wherefore taking this for a *Providential Warning*, he arose, and leaving *Jezreel*, went for his Life till he came to *Beersheba*, a City belonging to *Judah*, and so out of the Dominion of the King of *Israel*; And leaving his Servant there, he himself went a Day's Journey further into the Wilderness: Where sitting down under a *Juniper-Tree*, he requested for himself that he might die, saying, *It is enough now, O Lord, Take away my Life, for I am not better than my Fathers, that my Life should be prolonged.*

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While thus he lay under the *Juniper-Tree*, his Spirit oppressed with Sorrow, and his Body wearied with long Travel, he fell asleep. But he had not slept long, before an *Angel* touching him, bid him *arise and eat*.

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He thereupon starting up, saw a *Cake* baked on the Coals, and a *Cruse* (or Pot) of Water standing at his Head: Of which he eat and drank, and laid him down again. But the *Angel* of the Lord coming again, and touching him the Second time, said unto him, *Arise, and eat: For the Journey is too great for thee* to go through with that Food. He thereupon arising, did eat and drink again: And went in the Strength of that Meat, *Forty Days and Forty Nights* unto *Horeb* the Mount of God.

Being got to *Horeb*, he entred into a *Cave*, and lodged there. And behold the Word of the Lord came to him, and asked him, What dost thou here, *Elijah*? He answered, *I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts: For the Children of Israel have forsaken thy Covenant, thrown down thine Altars* (that is, have forsaken thy Worship) *and slain thy Prophets with the Sword; and I, I only* (so far as I know) *am left, and they seek my Life also, to take it away.*

Then said the Lord to him, *Go forth, and stand upon the Mount before me.* Which he doing, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong Wind rent the Mountains, and brake in pieces the Rocks before the Lord: But the Lord was not in the Wind. And after the Wind, an Earthquake: But the Lord was not in the Earthquake. And after the Earthquake a Fire: But the Lord was not in the Fire. By all which Emblems the Prophet was instructed, that the Lord was sufficiently able to overturn his Enemies by a mighty Power, though he did not choose to appear in that way. But after the Fire there was a still small Voice; which when *Elijah* heard, he wrapped his Face in his Mantle, and going out, stood in the Entrance of the Cave: Where he heard a Voice, saying to him, as before, *What dost thou here, Elijah?* To which when he had given the same Answer, which he had given to the like Question before; the Lord said unto him, *Go, return on thy way to the Wilderness of Damascus: And when thou comest thither, anoint Hazael to be King over Syria.*

And *Jehu*, the Son of *Nimshi*, shalt thou cause to be anointed King over *Israel*. And *Elisha* the Son of *Shaphat*, of *Abel-meholah*, shalt thou anoint to be Prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the Sword of *Hazael*, shall *Jehu* slay. And him that escapeth the Sword of *Jehu*, shall *Elisha* slay. For tho' thou thinkest that thou art left alone: Yet have I Seven Thousand left me in *Israel* all the Knees that have not bowed unto *Baal*, and every Mouth which hath not kissed, that is worshipped, him.

Elijah hereupon departing thence, in his way found *Elisha*; who was plowing with Twelve Yoke of Oxen before him, himself following the Twelfth: And as he passed by him, he cast his Mantle upon him.

Elisha, who understood the meaning of the Mantle being thrown upon him, straitway leaving the Oxen, ran after *Elijah*; and said, *Let me, I pray thee, kiss my Father and my Mother:* That is, Take my leave of my Relations. But *Elijah*, giving him a short Answer, only said, *Go, return: For what have I done to thee?* *Elisha* thereupon turning back from him, slew a Yoke of his own Oxen, and not staying for other Wood, boiled their Flesh with the Instruments of the Oxen; and having given it to the People to eat, followed *Elijah*, and became his Servant.

While these things were transacting in *Israel*, *Asa* King of *Judah*, having reigned Thirty and Nine Years, and in that time grown from better to worse, was taken with a Disease (perhaps, the Gout) in his Feet, which held him to his Death. And altho' it encreased upon him, until it was grown very violent: Yet in his Disease he sought not to the Lord; but as his own Name signified a Physician, (or Healer of Sickneses)

Sicknesses) he put his Confidence in the *Physicians*. Wherefore the Lord left him to his *Doctors*: And after Three Years Misery, he ended ^{1 Kings} his Life, in the One and Fortieth Year of his Reign; and was buried in ^{19.} his own Sepulchre, which he had made for himself, in the City of *David*, being laid in the Bed which was filled with Sweet Odours, and divers kinds of *Spices* prepared by the *Apothecaries Art*, and they made a very great *Burning* for him.

His Son *Jehoshaphat*, being then Five and Thirty Years of Age, began his Reign over *Judah*, in the Fourth Year of *Abab* King of *Israel*. And in his Entrance into the Government, he strengthened himself against *Israel*, by placing *Forces* in all the fenced Cities of *Judah*, and setting *Garrisons* in the Cities of *Ephraim*, which *Asa* his Father had taken, and throughout the Land of *Judah*. And the Lord was with *Jehoshaphat*, ^{2 Chr. 17.} because he walked in the First way of his Father *David*. So we read it here, *ver. 3*. But it may be questioned, whether *David* be not here slipt in, in the place of *Asa*: For in *1 Kings* 22. 43. and in *2 Chron.* 20. 32. *Asa* is named, not *David*; and it is certain, *Asa's* first Days were better than his last. But if we read it (as here) In the First ways of his Father *David*; we must understand it of *David's* ways, before he transgressed in the Case of *Bath-sheba* and *Uriah*.

For further Commendation of *Jehoshaphat*, it is added, That he fought not unto *Baalim* (that is, to any *Idol*:) but fought to the Lord God of his Fathers, walking in his Commandments, and not after the Doings of *Israel*; who had both revolted from the Government, and separated from the *Worship* which God had set up.

And because *Jehoshaphat* did thus cleave unto the Lord, the Lord established the Kingdom in his Hand, and all *Judah* brought him *Presents*: So that he had *Riches* and *Honour* in abundance. And his Heart being enlarged, and he encouraged in the way of the Lord, he went on with more fervent Zeal in the work of God: And not only took out of the Land the Remnant of the *Sodomites*, which remained in the Days of his Father *Asa*, ^{1 Kings} *1 Kings* 22. 46. but took away also the *High-* ^{20.} *places* and *Groves* out of *Judah*, *2 Chron.* 17. 6. Which latter yet must be understood with some *Qualification*, or *Allowance*: For it is said expressly, both in *2 Chron.* 20. 33. and *1 Kings* 22. 43. that *The High-places* were not taken away. It might therefore be that they were taken away in part, not wholly: In some *Places*, not every where. As we read of King *Asa* (this *Jehoshaphat's* Father) that he took away the *Sodomites* out of the Land, *1 Kings* 15. 12. and yet, it seems, there was a Remnant of them remained in the Days of *Asa*, which *Jehoshaphat* his Son did afterwards root out, *1 Kings* 22. 46.

In the Third Year of his Reign, *Jehoshaphat* sent to divers of his Princes, directing them to take with them certain *Levites* and *Priests* (whose Names are Recorded, *2 Chron.* 17. 7, 8.) and go teach in the Cities of *Judah*. These taking with them the *Book of the Law*, went about throughout all the Cities of *Judah*, and taught the People. And that they might not be interrupted in so good a Work, the Fear of the Lord fell upon all the Kingdoms of the Lands that were round about *Judah*; so that they made no War against *Jehoshaphat*. Nay, some of the *Philistines* brought *Jehoshaphat Presents*, and *Tribute-silver*: And the *Arabians* brought him *Flocks*; which were Tokens of *Homage*.

Jehoshaphat thus growing exceeding great, he built in *Judah* Castles and Cities of Store. And as he had much Business in the Cities of *Judah*: So he had a great Army at *Jerusalem*, and his Men of War were mighty Men of Valour. Of these he had One Million, One Hundred and Threescore Thousand always in Arms, and ready at his Command: Besides

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fides those that lay in *Garrison* in the fenced Cities, throughout all *Judab*.

While thus *Jehoshaphat* was ordering the Affairs of his Kingdom of *Judab*, *Ahab* King of *Israel* received an *haughty* Message from *Ben-hadad* King of *Syria*. Who having gathered all his Host together, and having Two and Thirty Kings with him, with Horses and Chariots, went up and besieged *Samaria*: And from his Camp sent *Heralds* into the City to King *Ahab*, who were commanded to say unto him, Thus saith *Ben-hadad*, 'Thy Silver and thy Gold is mine, thy Wives also, and thy Children, even the goodliest are mine. To which bold Demand, *Timorous Ahab* returned this humble Answer; My Lord, O King, according to thy Saying, I am thine, and all that I have.

The *Syrian* King, by this Submission grown more arrogant, sent his *Heralds* again; giving them in charge to say to *Ahab*, Thus saith *Ben-hadad*, Although I have sent thee Word, that thou shouldest deliver me thy Silver and thy Gold, with thy Wives and thy Children: Yet to morrow about this time, I will send my Servants unto thee, and they shall search thine House, and the Houses of thy Servants; and shall take away whatsoever is pleasant in thine Eyes.

This startled *Ahab*, finding the *Syrian* King thus grow upon him: Not knowing where it would stop, if he should suffer his Enemies to enter the City under this pretence. Wherefore calling to him the Elders of the Land, he said to them, Mark, I pray you, and see how this Man seeketh Mischief: For when he sent unto me for my Wives, and for my Children, for my Silver and my Gold, I denied him not, and yet he is not satisfied. When the Elders and the People heard this, they advised him not to hearken to him, nor to consent to his Demand. Whereupon he bid the *Heralds* of *Ben-hadad* tell their King, All that thou didst send for at the first, I will do: But this Thing I may not do. And with this Answer he dismissed them.

But when *Ben-hadad* heard this Answer, he in great Fury sent to him again with this insulting Threat, The Gods do so unto me, and more also, if the Dust of *Samaria* shall suffice for Handfuls, for all the People that follow me.

To this proud Boast, *Ahab*, grown now a little more hardy and resolved, returned him only this Proverbial Saying, Let not him that girdeth on his Armour, boast himself, as he that putteth it off. This nipping Answer so nettled the proud *Syrian* (who, with his Associate Kings, was drinking in their Pavilions) that immediately he gave order to his Servants, to plant their Batteries, against the City: Which they did.

Mean while the Lord, moved with Compassion towards *Israel*, and highly provoked by the proud Insults of the *Syrian*-King, sent a Prophet to *Ahab* King of *Israel*, with this Message; Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou seen all this great Multitude? Behold, I will deliver it into thine Hand this Day; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord.

Ahab, tho' an Enemy to God, and no Friend to his Prophets, being now in a great Streight; was glad to ask, and willing to take Counsel. Wherefore, when the Prophet had told him, that the Lord would deliver this great Multitude into his Hand, he presently asked, By whom? And the Prophet, in the Name of the Lord, answering, By the young Men (or Servants) of the Princes of the Provinces; the King asked, Who should order the Battel? To which the Prophet answering, Thou; He thereupon numbring the young Men of the Princes of the Provinces, found them to be Two Hundred Thirty and Two. And after that, numbring also all the People of the Children of *Israel*, (that he had then with him in the City) he could make up but Seven Thousand of them.

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The Muster thus made, at Noon the young Men (Servants to the Princes of the Provinces) sallied out of the City first; of which Notice ^{1 Kings 20} was quickly given to Ben-hadad (who, with his Two and Thirty assistant Kings, was still *Fudling* in their Pavilions.) He, not thinking it worth his notice, gave order, that whether they came forth for *Peace*, or for *War*, they should be taken alive. But he did not find it *so easie* a matter: For the young Men, followed by the rest of the *little* Army, gave so *vigorous* an *Onset*, that every one of them slaying his Man, they put the Syrians to Flight. Whereupon the King of Israel pursuing them with all the *small force* he had, smote the Horses and the Chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great Slaughter; Ben-hadad himself hardly escaping on Horse-back with the Horsemen.

Then came the Prophet to King Ahab again, and warned him to strengthen himself, and make good Provision for his Defence: For *at the return of the Year* (said he) *the King of Syria will come up against thee again.* And so it proved.

For the Servants of the King of Syria (to *excuse* themselves, and wipe off the *Stain* of their so great Defeat by so small a Number) told him, *The Gods of the Israelites are Gods of the Hills: And we fighting them in the Hill-Country, they were too strong for us there. But let us fight against them in the Plain* (said they) *and surely we shall be stronger than they.*

Wherefore they advised their King to take this Course, *viz.* To *set aside* the Two and Thirty Kings, and put so many Captains in their rooms; and to raise an Army, like for Numbers to that he had lost, Horse for Horse, and Chariot for Chariot, and *choose his Ground*, to fight on, *in the Plain*: And then they were confident, they should be stronger than the Israelites.

Pursuant to this Counsel, at the return of the Year, Ben-hadad, having numbred the Syrians, went up to Aphek (a City belonging to the Tribe of Asher, Josh. 19. 30. but possessed by the Syrians) to fight against Israel. And the Israelites, being also numbred, and furnished with Provisions, went out against them; pitching before them in Two Battalions, like Two little Flocks of Kids: But the Syrians filled the Country.

While thus the Two Armies stood facing one another, there came a Man of God, and said to the King of Israel, Thus saith the Lord, *Because the Syrians have said, The Lord is God of the Hills, but he is not God of the Valleys: Therefore will I deliver all this great Multitude into thine Hand, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord.*

When now the Armies had stood waiting for the Signal Seven Days, Ahab, encouraged by this Message from the Lord, joined the Battel: And that *bandful* (as it were) of Men of the Children of Israel, slew of the Syrians an Hundred Thousand Footmen in one Day. The rest fled to Aphek, and got into the City for Safety: But a Wall there fell upon Seven and Twenty Thousand of the Men that were left.

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As for King Ben-hadad himself, he fled among the rest to Aphek; and getting into the City, hid himself in an *inner Chamber*. And there his Servants coming to him told him, They had heard that the Kings of the House of Israel were *merciful Kings*: Wherefore they desired him to give leave, that they, putting Sackcloth on their Loins, and Ropes about their Necks, might go out to the King of Israel; *per-adventure*, said they, *he will save thy Life.*

Their King consenting, they, putting on their Sackcloth and Halters, went to the King of Israel, and said unto him, *Thy Servant Ben-hadad saith, I pray thee let me live.* Ahab, who knew not but he had been slain

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slain in the Battel, kindly answered, *Is he yet alive? He is my Brother.*

Now the Men did *diligently observe*, whether any *favourable Word* would drop from him; and hearing the Word [*Brother,*] they did *hastily catch it*: Wherefore repeating their Petition, they said, *Thy Brother Ben-hadad, &c.* Whereupon Ahab bid them go, and bring him to him: Which they having done, Ahab took him up into the Chariot to him. Ben-hadad being thus on a sudden, and unexpectedly, received into Favour; to shew his *Thankfulness*, said to Ahab, as they rode together, *The Cities which my Father took from thy Father (or Predecessor rather, viz. Baasha, Chap. 15. 20.) I will restore: And thou shalt make Streets for thee in Damascus, as my Father made in Samaria.* So Ahab, liking these Conditions, made a *Covenant* with Ben-hadad, and setting him at Liberty, sent him away.

Hereupon the Lord sent a Prophet to reprove Ahab, for having dismissed the Syrian King, whom he had delivered into his Hand. And the Prophet, intending to catch Ahab by a *Parabolical Speech* (as Nathan once did David, 2 Sam. 12.) and make him pass Sentence on himself; that he might assimilate himself to the Person he intended to represent, (which was a *wounded Soldier*) said unto his Neighbour, in the Word of the Lord, *Smite me, I pray thee*: But the Man (perhaps not understanding his Purpose) refused to smite him. Whereupon the Prophet said unto him, *Because thou hast not obeyed the Voice of the Lord, as soon as thou art departed from me, a Lion shall slay thee*; and so it proved: For as soon as he was departed from the Prophet, a Lion found him, and slew him. Then said the Prophet to another Man whom he found, *Smite me, I pray thee*: And that Man smote him so, that in smiting he wounded him.

The Prophet, thus accommodated to his Purpose, waited for King Ahab by the way, having *disguised* himself with *Ashes* upon his Face. And as the King passed by, he cried unto him, saying, *Thy Servant went out into the midst of the Battel; and behold, a Man turned aside, and brought a Man to me, and said, Keep this Man: If by any means he be missing, then shall thy Life be for his Life; or else thou shalt pay a Talent of Silver.* And as thy Servant was busie here and there, he was gone. Then said the King of Israel to him, *So shall thy Judgment be, thy self hast decided it.*

The Prophet thereupon hastily taking away the *Ashes* from his Face, the King of Israel discerned that he was of the Prophets. Then said the Prophet to him, *Thus saith the Lord, Because thou hast let go out of thine Hand, a Man whom I appointed to utter Destruction; therefore thy Life shall go for his Life; and thy People for his People, Which Doom* [when the King of Israel had heard, he went to his House in Samaria, not penitently sorry: but heavy and displeased, or rather stubborn, and in a Rage.

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Some time (but probably not long) after this, it came to pass that Ahab cast his Eye upon a *Vineyard* in Jezreel, which lay hard by a Palace of his there: And having a Mind to it, he said to Naboth the Jezreelite, to whom the *Vineyard* belonged, *Give me thy Vineyard, that I may have it for a Garden of Herbs, because it is near unto my House: And I will give thee for it a better Vineyard than it; or if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in Money.*

The Proposal seemed fair; setting aside the Law of God, which Ahab too little regarded. But Naboth being a conscientious Man, and zealous of the Law of God, which forbade the Children of Israel to sell their Inheritances, Levit. 25. 23. and Numb. 36. 7, &c. returned this Answer to Ahab, *The Lord forbid that I should give the Inheritance of my Fathers unto thee.* Ahab

Abab hereupon going into his House heavy and displeased (because *Naboth* would not part with the Inheritance of his Fathers) laid himself down upon his Bed, in a sullen Fit; and turning away his Face from the Company, would not eat his Victuals. Which *Jezebel* his Wife observing, she came to him, and asking him why his Spirit was so sad, that he would not eat? He told her the whole Matter that had passed between *Naboth* and him. Whereupon (after she had, by way of Exprobation, asked him, *Dost thou now govern the Kingdom of Israel?* As much as to say, Art thou fit to be a King, and dost not understand the Power of a King?) to cheer him up again, she wish'd him to rise and eat, and let his Heart be Merry; assuring him, she would give him *Naboth's* Vineyard.

Then writing Letters in *Abab's* Name, and sealing them with his Seal, she sent them unto the Elders and Nobles, that dwelt in the same City where *Naboth* dwelt; and in the Letters she wrote thus. 'Proclaim a Fast, and set *Naboth* on high among the People; and set Two Men, Sons of Belial (Knights of the Post) before him, to bear Witness against him, that he did blaspheme God and the King. Then carry him out, and stone him to Death. Here we may observe, that this Wicked Woman, tho' her self an Idolatrous Heathen, could make the Law of God (which commanded that Blasphemers should be stoned, *Levit. 24. 16.*) a pretence whereby to shed the Blood of this innocent Man.

Upon Receipt of these Letters, the Elders and Nobles of *Israel*, (pursuant to the Direction *Jezebel* had therein given them, which they supposed to have come from the King) proclaimed a Fast (which among them was the usual Preparation to Judicial Tryals: But this was such a Fast as the Prophet *Isaiah*, not long after, complained of; a Fast to smite with the Fist of Wickedness, *Isa. 58. 4.*) And having set *Naboth* on high amongst the People (that he might be seen of all the Assembly) the Two false Witnesses came in, and sitting before him, charged him, in the Presence of the People, that he had blasphemed God and the King. Whereupon they carried him out of the City, and having stoned him to Death, sent *Jezebel* Word that *Naboth* was stoned and Dead. Nor did they shed his Blood only, but the Blood of his Sons too (that there might be none to claim) as may be gathered from *2 Kings 9. 26.*

When *Jezebel* had received this Account, she hastened to her Husband King *Abab*, and said, *Arise, Arise, take Possession of the Vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to let thee have for thy Money: For Naboth is now Dead.* Whereupon *Abab* went down to take Possession of *Naboth's* Vineyard; as forfeited to him by *Naboth's* pretended Treason.

But while he was there, the Word of the Lord came to *Elijah* the Tishbite, saying, *Arise, Go down to meet Abab King of Israel, who is in the Vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it. And thou shalt say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, 'Hast thou killed, and also taken Possession? Wherefore in the Place where Dogs licked the Blood of Naboth, shall Dogs lick thy Blood, even thine.*

By that time the Prophet had delivered thus much of his Message, *Abab*, interrupting him, said, *Hast thou found me, O mine Enemy?* Yes, answered the Prophet, I have found thee, because thou hast sold thy self to work Evil in the Sight of the Lord. Then going on with his Message in the Name of the Lord, he added;

'Behold, I will bring Evil upon thee, and will take away thy Posterity: and will cut off from *Abab* him that pisseth against the Wall, and him that is shut up and left in *Israel*. And I will make thy House like the House of *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*, and like the House of *Baasha*,

1 Kings
21.

‘ Baasha, the Son of Ahijah (both which Families were utterly cut off) For the Provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to Anger, in making Israel to Sin. Him that dieth of Ahab in the City, the Dogs shall eat : And him that dieth in the Field, shall the Fowls of the Air eat.

No wonder is it, that the Lord denounced so severe a Sentence upon Ahab : For there was none like unto him, who did sell himself to work Wickedness in the Sight of the Lord ; doing very abominably in following Idols (called in contempt, *dungy Gods* :) To which Jezebel his Wife stirred him up. Wherefore Jezebel went not without her just Doom : For of her also the Lord said, *The Dogs shall eat Jezebel, by the Wall, or Ditch, of Jezreel.*

Yet, as bad as Ahab was, when he heard this fearful Judgment denounced by the Prophet against him, being struck with a sudden Terror, he shewed all the Outward Signs of Repentance. For he rent his Clothes, and put Sackcloth upon his Flesh, and Fasted, and lay in Sackcloth, and went softly, like a Mourner, or one in Affliction. Nor was this short shew of Repentance wholly Rejected : But the Lord took notice of it, and said to the Prophet Elijah, *Sceſt thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me ? Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the Evil in his Days : But in his Son's Days I will bring the Evil upon his House.* Thus as Ahab humbled himself for a short time (which the Sequel shewed :) So God respited his Punishment for a short time also.

1 Kings
22.

2 Chr. 18.

It is not improbable, that this Temporary shew of Humiliation in Ahab, might be an Inducement to Jehoshaphat King of Judah, to make a League with him : For presently after this we read, that Jehoshaphat joined in Affinity with Ahab ; taking Ahab's Daughter to be Wife to his Son and Heir, Jehoram, 2 Chron. 21. 6. and 2 Kings 8. 18.

This unhappy League drew him, not long after, to Samaria, to visit Ahab : Who killing Sheep and Oxen in abundance, made a Royal Entertainment for him, and the People that came with him.

Ahab, willing to improve this Opportunity to his own Advantage, invited Jehoshaphat to go with him to Battel to Ramoth-Gilead (a City of Right belonging to Israel) to recover it from the Syrians. To which Jehoshaphat over hastily and unwarily consented, saying, *I am as thou art, and my People are as thy People ; and we will be with thee in the War.* Yet quickly recollecting himself, he desired King Ahab to enquire at the Word of the Lord, that they might know, whether the Lord did approve their Undertaking.

Ahab thereupon summoned his Prophets together, who were Four Hundred Men (probably those called the Prophets of the Groves, who usually fed at Queen Jezebel's Table, and scaped the Brunt at Carmel, 1 Kings 18.) and putting the Question to them, *Shall I go to Ramoth-gilead to Battel, or shall I forbear ?* They unanimously answered, *Go up : For the Lord hath delivered it into the Hand of the King.*

But, said Jehoshaphat, Is there not here a Prophet of the Lord besides, that we might enquire by him ? Yes, said Ahab, there is one Man (but one true Prophet, alas ! to Four Hundred false ones ;) and that is, Micajah, the Son of Imlah ; but I hate him : For he never Prophecieth Good concerning me, but Evil. Nay, replied Jehoshaphat, *Let not the King say so. That is, Let him not hate the Prophet, for his Message-sake : Nor yet reject the Message, because it doth not please him.* Then the King of Israel, calling for one of his Officers, bid him make haste, and fetch Micajah to him.

Mean while, the Two Kings, of Israel and of Judah, sitting either of them on his Throne, cloathed in their Royal Robes, in a plain Place at the entring in of the Gate of Samaria ; all the Prophets prophesied be-

fore

fore them, and with one accord said, *Go up to Ramoth-Gilead and prosper : For the Lord shall deliver it into the Hand of the King.* And one of ^{1 King 22.} them (whose Name was Zedekiah, the Son of Chenaanah) the better to ^{2 Chr. 18.} impress their Notion upon the Kings minds, made him Horns of Iron, and said, Thus saith the Lord, *With these thou shalt push Syria, until thou consume them.*

While thus the false Prophets were playing their Pranks, to deceive the Two Kings, the Officer that went to fetch Micajah, willing either to further the Enterprize, or to prevent Sufferings to the Prophet, told him how unanimously all the King's Prophets had Prophefied good Success to him in this Expedition; and desired him to speak as they had done. But good Micajah gave him this short Answer, *As the Lord liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak.*

Being now come before the Two Kings, Ahab said to him, *Micajah, Shall we go to Ramoth-Gilead to Battel? Or shall we forbear?* He, at the first, in Contempt of the false Prophets, and the better to expose them, said, as they had done, *Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your Hand.* But he spake it in such a manner, that King Ahab easily perceived he derided them. Therefore he said to him, *How many times shall I adjure thee, that thou say nothing but the Truth to me, in the Name of the Lord?* Nay, replied Micajah, if thou wilt hear the Truth, then mind what I say. *I did see all Israel scattered upon the Mountains, as Sheep without a Shepherd:* And the Lord said, *These have no Master, let them therefore return every Man to his House in Peace.*

This was a plain and apt Simile, setting forth the Death of Ahab, and the Defeat of his People, if they proceeded to this Battel. And Ahab it seems understood it so: For interrupting the Prophet here, he said to Jehoshaphat, *Did I not tell thee that he would not Prophefie Good unto me, but Evil?* But the Prophet, not daunted with Ahab's Interruption, proceeded, saying;

Therefore hear the Word of the Lord. I saw the Lord sitting upon his Throne, and all the Host of Heaven standing on either Hand of him. And the Lord said, Who shall entice Ahab King of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? And one spake after one manner, and another after another manner. (Thus the Prophet, the more sensibly to affect the Hearers, represented the Heavenly Vision, after the manner of Humane Consultations.) Then (said he) came out a Spirit, and standing before the Lord, said, I will entice him. And the Lord asked him, wherewith? Or by what means he would entice him? I will go out (said he) and be a lying Spirit in the Mouth of all his Prophets (For all Ahab's Prophets spake the same Thing, in the same Words, as if they had but one Mouth.) Then said the Lord, Go out, and do so: For thou shalt entice him, and shalt also prevail. Now therefore (added Micajah) Behold, the Lord hath put a lying Spirit in the Mouth of these thy Prophets: And the Lord hath spoken Evil against thee.

This ought not to seem strange, or be offensive to any, that the Lord should here be said to have put a lying Spirit in the Mouth of the false Prophets: For it is his Prerogative, a Token of his absolute Sovereignty, that he may use Instruments of all Sorts, to effect his Work by, whether for the advancing his own Honour, the Correction of his Children, or the Destruction of his Enemies.

This Saying of Micajah's [That the Lord had put a lying Spirit into the Mouth of these Jezebean Prophets,] angered them extreamly: Insomuch that Zedekiah (he that made the Iron Horns, and who seems to have been a Topping Man amongst them) coming up to Micajah, smote him on

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the Check (For it is the False Prophet commonly that uses the Violence, not the True;) and in Derision said, Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me, to speak unto thee? That, replied Micajah Thou shalt see in that Day, when thou shalt go from Chamber to Chamber to hide thyself.

1 Kings
22.
2 Chr. 18.

By this time Ahab had enough of Micajah. Wherefore breaking off the Discourse between Zedekiah and him, he commanded the Officer to take Micajah, and carry him back to Amon the Governor, and to Joash the King's Son, and say to them, Thus saith the King; Put this Fellow (so in contempt he called the Prophet) in the Prison, and feed him with Bread of Affliction, and with Water of Affliction, (Afflict him with want of fit and sufficient Food) until I return in Peace. Nay, said Micajah, If thou return in Peace, then hath not the Lord spoken by me: And he bid all the People take notice of it.

Tho' King Jehoshaphat heard all this, and knew Micajah to be a Prophet of the Lord: Yet having linkt himself in with wicked Ahab, both by Affinity and League, he went up with him to fight against Ramoth-Gilead. But before the Battel was joined, Ahab (mindful probably, of what Micajah had said, and willing to frustrate the Prophecy) proposed, that he would disguise himself; and so go into the Battel: But that Jehoshaphat should fight in his Royal Robes. And accordingly they did so.

Now Ben-badad, the King of Syria, had commanded the Captains of his Chariots to single out the King of Israel: And not to fight with any other, small or great, but with him only. This was a very unkind Return to Ahab, for the great Kindness he had shewed Ben-badad, in their former War; when, tho' Ben-badad was then the Aggressor. Ahab, to his own great Damage, generously gave him both his Life and Liberty, when he had him wholly at his Mercy.

A. M.
3107.

However, the Syrian Captains observing their King's Command, fought after the King of Israel; and when they saw Jehoshaphat, concluding him to be the King of Israel, they beset him round on every side, and made so vigorous an Impression, that Jehoshaphat was fain to cry out: And the Lord having Compassion on him, helped him at this great Streight, by making them sensible that it was not the King of Israel, and thereupon inclining them to turn back from pursuing him.

Thus narrowly escaped Jehoshaphat. But Ahab's politick Disguise did not secure him. For a certain Man (uncertain who) drawing a Bow at a venture, hit him between the Joints of his Armour, and gave him a mortal Wound. Whereupon he said to his Charioteer, Turn thine Hand, and carry me out of the Host: For I am wounded. Yet because the Battel grew hotter upon the Israelites that Day, the King of Israel was held up in his Chariot till the Evening; that his being so wounded, might not be known to his Soldiers, to discourage them: And about the going down of the Sun, he died. Then was a Retreat sounded, and Proclamation made, throughout the Host of Israel, that every Man should escape to his City, or to his Country-dwelling. And herein was fulfilled the Vision of Micajah; for Israel was now scattered like Sheep that had no Shepherd nor Master; their Master Ahab being slain.

King Ahab, thus dead, was brought to Samaria, and buried there. And because while he was held up in his Chariot, the Blood ran out of his Wound, not only into his Armour, but into his Chariot also, therefore his Chariot was washed in the Pool of Samaria, as well as his Armour: And the Dogs licked up his Blood, according to the Word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah the Tishbite.

Thus

Thus died this wicked King. For a further Account of whose publick Acts, we are here referred (as we are often elsewhere, on other Occasions) to a *Book of Chronicles*, long since lost: In which, amongst other Things, mention, it seems, was made of an *Ivory House*, which King *Ahab* built. ^{1 Kings 22.} ^{2 Chr. 19.}

And as *Samaria* was built by *Omri* his Father: So in his Days was *Jericho* rebuilt by *Hiel* the *Bethlebite*; who according to the Word of the Lord, which above *Five Hundred Years* before, he spake by *Joshua* the Son of *Nun*, *Josh. 6. 26.* laid the Foundation thereof in *Abiram* his First-born, and set up the Gates thereof in his youngest Son *Segub*, *1 Kings 16. 34.*

Altho' *Jehoshaphat* the King of *Judah*, escaped without hurt in the Battel: Yet he escaped not without Reproof from the Lord after the Battel, for having joined himself in Affinity and League with wicked *Ahab*. For as soon as he was come back to *Jerusalem*, *Jehu*, the Son of *Hanani* the Seer, went out to meet him with this Greeting, *Shouldst thou help the Ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore is Wrath upon thee from the Lord.* Nevertheless, (so he went on, that the good King might not be too much cast down) *there are good things found in thee; inasmuch as thou hast taken away the Groves out of the Land, and hast prepared thine Heart to seek God.*

This gentle Reproof had so good an Operation upon *Jehoshaphat*, that after he had made some stay at *Jerusalem*, he took his Progress thro' the People, from *Beersheba* to *Mount Ephraim* (that is, from one end of his Kingdom to the other;) and brought them back unto the Lord God of their Fathers. And having set Judges in the Land, he said unto them, *Take heed what ye do: For ye judge not for Man, but for the Lord; who is with you in the Judgment. Wherefore now, let the Fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed and do it: For there is no Iniquity with the Lord our God, nor Respect of Persons, nor taking of Gifts.*

Moreover, in *Jerusalem* did *Jehoshaphat* set of the Levites, and of the Priests, and of the chief of the Fathers of *Israel*, for the Judgment of the Lord (matters appertaining to his Worship;) and for Controversies (or Differences in Civil Matters) when they (the Judges, he had set in the several Cities) should have recourse to *Jerusalem* for their Advice or Assistance. And to these he gave Charge, saying, 'Thus shall ye do, in the Fear of the Lord, faithfully, and with a perfect Heart. And what Cause soever shall come to you, of your Brethren that dwell in the Cities, between Blood and Blood, between Law and Commandment, Statutes and Judgments, ye shall even warn them that they trespass not against the Lord, and so Wrath come upon you, and upon your Brethren. This do, and ye shall not trespass. Then directing them unto whom, upon all Occasions, they should have Recourse, in all Matters relating as well to Religion, as to the Civil Estate, he concluded with this short Exhortation and Encouragement; *Deal Courageously: And the Lord will be with the Good.*

The Truth of this himself soon after experienced. For the Children of *Moab* and *Ammon*, with their Confederates, coming against him in Battel; News was brought him on a sudden, that there came a great Multitude against him, from beyond the Sea, on this side *Syria*: And that they were in *En-gedi*, not a great way off. This unexpected News put *Jehoshaphat* in great Fear; and not having Confidence in his own Strength, he set himself to seek the Lord: And in order thereunto proclaimed a Fast throughout all the Kingdom of *Judah*. Whereupon *Judah* gathered themselves together, to ask help of the Lord; even out of all the Cities of *Judah* they came to *Jerusalem*, to seek the Lord. And

Jehosha-

Jehoshaphat the King standing in the Congregation of *Judah*, in the House of the Lord, before the New Court, thus addressed himself unto God.

2 Chr. 20.

‘ O Lord God of our Fathers, Art not thou God in Heaven? And rulest
‘ not thou over all the Kingdoms of the *Heathen*? And in thine Hand
‘ is there not Power and Might, so that none is able to withstand thee?
‘ Art not thou (more especially) *Our* God, who didst drive out the
‘ Inhabitants of this Land before thy People *Israel*, and gavest it to the
‘ Seed of *Abraham* thy Friend for ever? And they dwelt therein, and
‘ have built thee a Sanctuary therein for thy Name, saying, *If when Evil*
‘ *cometh upon us as a Judgment* (whether it be the Sword, Pestilence, or
‘ *Famine*) *we stand in thy Presence before this House* (in which thy Name
‘ is called upon) *and cry unto thee in our Affliction; then hear thou and*
‘ *help.* And now behold, the Children of *Ammon* and *Moab*, and
‘ those of Mount *Seir* (whom thou wouldest not let *Israel* invade, when
‘ they came out of the Land of *Egypt*; but they turned from them, and
‘ destroyed them not.) Behold, I say, *how they reward us*; for they
‘ are come up against us, to cast us out of thy Possession, which thou
‘ hast given us to inherit. O our God, wilt thou not judge them?
‘ For we (of our selves) have no might against this great Company,
‘ that cometh up against us; neither know we what to do: *But our Eyes*
‘ *are upon thee.*

Thus spake the King, in the Name of all the People. And all *Judah* stood before the Lord, with their Wives and Children, even their little Ones.

Then upon *Jehaziel* (*The Vision of God*) a *Levite* of the Sons of *Asaph*, came the Spirit of the Lord, in the midst of the Congregation: And he said, (‘ Harken ye, all *Judah*, and ye Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, and
‘ thou King *Jehoshaphat*,) Thus saith the Lord unto you; Be not afraid,
‘ nor dismayed by reason of this great Multitude: For *the Battel* is
‘ *not yours, but God’s.* To morrow go ye down against them: Behold
‘ they come up by the *Cliff of Ziz*; and ye shall find them at the end
‘ of the Valley, before the Wilderness of *Jeruel*. Which particular
Descriptions of Places he gave, that when the People should find it so,
they might thereby be confirmed in the Truth of his Prophecy.

Then going on; ‘ But, said he, ye shall not need to fight in this Battel.
‘ Set your selves and be still; and *see the Salvation of the Lord with you*,
‘ O *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, To Morrow, I say, go out against them; and
‘ fear not, nor be dismayed: For the Lord will be with you.

Upon this gracious Answer from the Lord, King *Jehoshaphat* bowed his Head, with his Face towards the Ground; and all *Judah*, and the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, falling down before the Lord, worshipped him: And certain of the *Levites* stood up, and praised the Lord God of *Israel* with a loud Voice on high.

Early next Morning they marched out into the Wilderness of *Tekoa*. And as they went forth, *Jehoshaphat*, standing in the way, said, *Hear me, O Judah, and ye Inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established: Believe his Prophets, so shall ye Prosper.* Then, having consulted with the People, he appointed Singers unto the Lord, and such as should praise God, under the Title of *The Beauty of Holiness*, as they went out before the Army; and should say, *Praise the Lord, for his Mercy endureth for ever.*

Tho’ this was a sort of *Triumphing before the Victory*, yet it was well grounded; the Lord by his Prophet, having given them his Word for it: Nor was it long, before he made it good, For as they began to Sing, and to Praise, the Lord set *Ambushments* against their Enemies from
amongst

amongst themselves, so that they smote one another. For the Children of *Ammon*, and of *Moab*, fell upon the Inhabitants of *Mount Seir*, to^{2 Chr. 27.} slay and utterly destroy them: And when they had made an end of them, they set themselves to destroy one another. So that when *Jehoshaphat* with his Army came towards the Watch-Tower in the Wilderness, and looked for the great Armies of the Enemies, behold, they were dead Bodies, fallen to the Earth, and none of them left alive. This was so evidently *the Lord's doing*, that it may well be called *one of the Battels of the Lord*; and might justly claim a Place in that Book of *the Wars of the Lord*, which is mentioned in *Numb. 21. 14.*

Thus *Jehoshaphat* and his People, instead of Fighting, came to take the Spoil of their Enemies; which they found among them in abundance: Both Riches with the Dead Bodies, and precious Jewels (which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away. For they were Three Days in gathering the Spoil; it was so much.

On the Fourth Day they assembled themselves together in the Valley. And that they might not be wanting of a *Thankful Acknowledgment* to the Lord, for so great a Deliverance; they there solemnly blessed the Lord. From which Act, the Name of that Place was afterwards called the Valley of *Berachah*, that is, of Blessing.

Then setting forward in good Order, with *Jehoshaphat* their King at the Head of them, they returned to *Jerusalem* with Joy, playing on Psalteries and Harps, and sounding their Trumpets, until they came to the House of the Lord; because the Lord had made them to rejoice over their Enemies.

The Destruction of this invading Army was so evidently seen to be the Act of God, that it struck Terror into the rest of the Nations, and the Fear of God was on the Kingdoms round about, when they heard that the Lord fought against the Enemies of *Israel*: So that the Realm of *Jehoshaphat* was quiet; for his God gave him rest on every side.

Yet after all this (see the *Instability of Man*) *Jehoshaphat* joined himself with *Abaziah* King of *Israel* (Son to wicked *Ahab*;) who succeeded his Father in his Vices, as well as in his Kingdom, did wickedly as he had done, walking in the way of his Father *Ahab*, and of *Jezebel* his Mother, and in the way of *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*, who made *Israel* to sin: For he served *Baal*, and worshipped him; and thereby provoked to anger the Lord God of *Israel*, according to all that his Father had done.

The Design of this League between *Jehoshaphat* and him, was to send a Fleet jointly between them, to fetch Gold from *Ophir* (an Eastern Country, which yielded the finest Gold:) And in order thereunto they built the Ships in *Ezion-Geber*, which signifies *the Counsel of Man*: But the Undertaking being out of the Counsel of God, the Lord disappointed the Enterprize, by breaking the Ships in the Harbour. Which done, *Eliezer* (which signifies *The help of God*) Son of *Dodarah* (which signifies *Love*) prophesied against *Jehoshaphat*, and told him, Because he had joined himself with *Abaziah*, the Lord had broken his Works. And so indeed he had: For the Ships were so broken, that they were not able to go to *Tarshish*.

This was the Second time that this good King *Jehoshaphat* had tript in this kind. The First had like to have cost him his Life, when he joined with wicked *Ahab*: A King too, as well as he, yea, and a King of *Israel*; but a wicked one. This Second did cost him the Loss of his Fleet, for joining with *Ahab's* wicked Son. And this may stand as a Way-mark, for a Warning to all, both Princes and private Persons, who profess to serve and worship the true God, not to join themselves, with God's Enemies.

The Second BOOK of the
K I N G S;

Including the rest (from the 20th Chapter)

Of the Second BOOK of the
C H R O N I C L E S:

And containing an History of 320 Years; To the Captivity of Zedekiah the last King of Judah, the Destruction of the Temple and City Jerusalem, by Nebuchadnezzar, and the Proclamation of Cyrus for Rebuilding the Temple. Within the Compass of which Period, most of the Prophets whose Writings are extant, viz.

Jonah,	} {	Zephaniah,
Amos,		Habakkuk,
Hosea,		Nahum,
Joel,		Ezekiel,
Isaiah,		Obadiah,
Micah,		and
Jeremiah,		Daniel

Prophefied; and probably in Order of Time, as they are here set: Whose several Books are more or less taken notice of, in the Course of the History, as they afford more or less Matter relating thereunto.

IT was in the Seventeenth Year of Jehoshaphat King of Judah, that Abaziah Son of Ahab, began to reign over Israel, 1 Kings 22. 51. And in the Second Year of his Reign, he received an Hurt by a Fall, which he had through a Lattess, or Grate in his upper Chamber in Samaria: Which being made to give Light to the lower Rooms, he, it seems, dropt through it. Whereupon he sent Messengers to enquire of Baal-zebub the God of Ekron (the same that in the New Testament is called, The Prince of the Devils, Luke 11. 15.) whether he should recover of that Hurt, or not.

This was strange. We shall read anon, in 2 King. 8. 8. that when Benhadad, King of Syria, a profest Heathen, was Sick, he sent to Elisha, the Prophet of the God of Israel, to enquire if he should recover of that Disease.

Dilease. But here a King of Israel sends, on a like occasion, to enquire
 2 Kin. 1. at an *Heathen God*.

This so provoked the God of *Israel*, that sending an *Angel* to *Elijah* the *Tishbite*, he commanded him to go meet the Messengers of the King of *Samaria*, and say thus unto them, *Is it not because there is not a God in Israel? that ye go to enquire of Baal-Zebub the God of Ekron?* (that is, *Doth not your going to enquire of the God of Ekron, plainly speak, that ye do not believe there is a God in Israel?*) Now therefore, thus saith the Lord, *Thou* (King *Abaziah*, who hast sent these Messengers to enquire of an *Heathen God*, thou) *shalt not come down from that Bed, on which thou art gone up to lie; but shalt surely die.*

Upon this, the Messengers, not thinking it needful to go to *Ekron*, returned to *Samaria*; and coming to the King sooner than expected, he asked why they were come back? They told him there came a Man up to meet them, and bid them turn back again unto the King that sent them, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, *Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that thou sendest to enquire of Baal-zebub the God of Ekron?* Therefore thou shalt not come down from that Bed, on which thou art gone up; but shalt surely die.

It seems the Messengers did not know the Prophet: For the King was fain to ask them *What manner of Man* it was that met them, and told them these Words. And when they told him that he was an *Hairy Man* (which is understood to be spoken, *not of his Person*, but his Garment, which was *rough, Course and Hairy*) and girt with a *Girdle of Leather* about his Loyns; he said, *It is Elijah the Tishbite.* For it is probable he might have formerly seen him, when he denounced Judgment against his Father *Ahab*.

A. M. 3109. *Elijah*, having delivered his Message, was gone, and had sat him down on the Top of an Hill. Thither the King sent unto him a *Captain of Fifty*, with his Fifty Men: That if he refused to come with him by *fair means*, they might bring him *by force*.

The *Captain*, as soon as he came to him, like a *rough and resolute Soldier*, said, *Thou Man of God, the King hath said, Come down.* This was not such Language as the *Man of God* used to receive, from such as professed to be the *People of God*. The Prophet therefore answered him as *short*, and as *sharp*. *If* (said he) *I be a Man of God, then let Fire come down from Heaven, and consume thee and thy Fifty.* Immediately came Fire down from Heaven, and consumed him and his Fifty Men.

The King being acquainted with this, sent unto him another *Captain of Fifty*, with his Fifty. Who (*nothing daunted* at the *Divine Execution* done upon the former *Captain* and his Men) coming boldly up to *Elijah*, said, *O Man of God, Thus hath the King said, Come down quickly.* The Prophet, answering him as he had done the former, said, *If I be a Man of God, let Fire come down from Heaven, and consume thee and thy Fifty.* Whereupon the Fire of God, coming down from Heaven, forthwith consumed him and his Fifty.

This was *hot Work*. And tho' it may seem *An Hard Case*, that Men under Command should suffer so severely, for executing the *Commands* of their *Superiors*: Yet all *Subordinate Ministers* may hence learn, how dangerous a thing it is to *persecute a Servant of God*, though required by the highest of *Human Powers*.

The *hardened King*, notwithstanding this, sent again a *Captain of a Third Fifty*, with his Fifty. But this *Captain*, having *bought Wisdom* at the *Cost* of the Two former, and being grown *wary* by the *Mischief* they had suffered; when he came to *Elijah*, fell on his Knees before him (bowing to that *Divine Power*, which he saw had broken forth in *Wrath* upon

upon the others, and which he knew was a like able to destroy him and his Men also) and, instead of Commanding, besought him, Saying, O² *King. 1.* *Man of God, I pray thee, let my Life, and the Life of these Fifty thy Servants, be precious in thy Sight. Behold there came Fire down from Heaven, and burnt up the Two Captains of the former Fifties, with their Fifties: Wherefore let my Life now be precious in thy Sight.*

This was *regardful, and moving Language*: And upon this, the Angel of the Lord said to *Elijah*, Go down with him; be not afraid of him, (the King.) *Elijah* thereupon went down with the Captain: And being brought before the King, said unto him, *Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast sent Messengers to enquire of Baal-zebub the God of Ekron (as if there were no God in Israel to enquire of) therefore thou shalt not come down from off that Bed on which thou art gone up; but shalt surely die.* This was quickly made good; for *Ahaziah* did not recover of his Hurt, but died soon after, according to the Word of the Lord, which *Elijah* had spoken. And *Jehoram*, his Brother (for he had no Son) reigned in his stead.

The time now drawing near, wherein the Lord had determined to take up his Servant *Elijah* into Heaven by a Whirlwind, *Elijah* went from Gilgal, taking with him *Elisha*, whom God had before appointed, (*1 Kings 19. 16.*) to succeed him in his *Prophetical Office*. And as they went by the way, *Elijah* said unto *Elisha*, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Beth-el. But *Elisha* answered him, as the Lord liveth, and as thy Soul liveth, I will not leave thee: So they went down to Beth-el together. *2 King. 2 A. M. 3109.*

Being come thither, the Sons of the Prophets that were there, having a *Prophetick Sense* that *Elijah's* departure was at Hand, came to *Elisha*, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy Master from thy Head to Day? Yes, said *Elisha*, I know it: Hold you your Peace.

At Beth-el, *Elijah* said again to *Elisha*, Tarry here I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho. But *Elisha* answered him, as before, assuring him that he would not leave him: So they went on together to Jericho. And there also the Sons of the Prophets asked *Elisha*, as the others had done at Beth-el, If he knew that the Lord would take his Master from him that Day. To whom again in like manner he answered, Yes? I know it: And bid them also hold their Peace.

Here again *Elijah* said to *Elisha*, Tarry I pray thee here: For the Lord hath sent me to Jordan. But *Elisha*, as before resolvedly answering, that he would not leave him, they went on still together.

Tho' *Elijah* seemed willing to have shaken off *Elisha*, in this Journey, telling him, the Lord had sent him to this, that, and the other Place: Yet the Distance of the Places one from the other, and the total Silence of any Business he did, or had to do, at Beth-el, or at Jericho, make way for a reasonable Conjecture, that *Elijah*, knowing *Elisha* was to succeed him, took these Journeys, to prove the Love, Faith, Zeal and Constancy of *Elisha*.

When they were come down to Jordan, and they two only stood by the River's side, *Elijah* took his Mantle (or Cloak, which he usually wore) and wrapping it together, smote the Waters therewith: Which thereupon divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry Ground.

Having thus miraculously crossed Jordan (the River of Judgment) *Elijah* said to *Elisha*, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. Whereupon *Elisha* said, I pray thee let a double Portion of thy Spirit be upon me. Wherein he is thought to have alluded to the

Law for Inheritances among the Jews, Deut. 21. 17. by which he who, in right of Primogeniture, succeeded to the Father, in the Government of the Family, enjoyed a double Part or Portion of the Estate or Goods; that is, Twice as much as any other of the Family had. And therefore since God had been pleased to adopt him to be Elijah's Successor in the Prophetick Ministry, he craved the Privilege of Primogeniture, a double Portion of that Spirit, which Elijah had been endued with.

Elijah told him, he had asked an hard thing. But yet (added he) it shall be granted thee, if thou seest me when I am taken from thee: Otherwise not. Implying, that there must be a Spiritual Vigilancy or Watchfulness, in him that expects to receive a Spiritual Blessing.

Thus they walking on, and talking, on a sudden there appeared a Chariot of Fire, and Horses of Fire, which parted them asunder: And Elijah went up by a Whirlwind into Heaven.

Elisha saw it: And that Elijah might know he saw it, he cryed out, My Father, my Father; the Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof! After which, seeing him no more, he took hold of his own Clothes, and to express his Sorrow, rent them in Two pieces.

Then taking up the Mantle of Elijah, which, as he ascended, fell from him; he went back, and stood by the Bank of Jordan. And with the Mantle that fell from Elijah, smiting the Waters, as Elijah had done, he said, Where is the God of Elijah? Upon which the Waters parted hither and thither: So that he also went over on dry Ground.

This being observed by some of the Sons of the Prophets (who, following them out of Jericho, stood aloof off, to see what would be done) they said one to another, The Spirit of Elijah doth rest upon Elisha. And thereupon going to meet him, they bowed themselves to the Ground, before him, acknowledging him to have the chief Place among them, as Elijah before had had.

These, being over-solicitous about Elijah's Body, and Surmising that peradventure the Spirit of the Lord, having taken him up, might have cast him upon some Mountain, or in some Valley, desired leave of Elisha, that they might send out Fifty Men of their Company, to seek him: But Elisha plainly forbad them. Yet they importunately pressing him, he at length, against his Mind, yielded to them. Whereupon the Fifty Men went out, and having sought him Three Days to no purpose, returned to Jericho; where they found Elisha, and by him were blamed, for their over-Officiousness.

While Elisha tarried at Jericho, the Men of the City came to him, and told him, that tho' the Situation of the City was pleasant, as he himself might observe: Yet the Water was nought, and the Ground barren. He thereupon bid them bring him a new Cruse (or Vial) and put some Salt therein: Which when they had done, he went forth unto the Spring of the Waters, and having cast in the Salt there, he said, Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these Waters; there shall not be from thence any more unwholsomeness or barrenness. So the Waters were healed from thenceforward, according to the Saying of Elisha.

A. M. 3097. *From thence he went unto Beth-el (which had been, and for ought appears, then was the chief Seat of Idolatry in Israel, where Jeroboam had set up one of his Calvish Idols, 1 Kings 12. 28, 29.) And as he was going up by the way, a Company of little Children coming out of the City, mocked him, saying, Go up thou Baldhead, go up thou Baldhead. He turning back, and looking on them, cursed them in the Name of the Lord. Whereupon there came forth Two She-Bears out of an adjacent Wood, and Tore Two and Forty of the Children.*

Unlikely

Unlikely it is that so *severe a Judgment*, would have been inflicted on these little Children, had their mocking *Elisha* proceeded only from *Childish Folly*. It is therefore reasonable to conclude, that the Prophet was sensible these Children had been *encouraged* by their *idolatrous Parents*, or others of that Place, to *deride* and *mock him* as a Prophet of the Lord, who was *zealous against their Idolatry*: And the Indignity offered to him, in his *Prophetical Capacity*, reflecting on the Lord who sent him, was therefore the more *exemplarily punished*; that others might fear, and learn to beware.

From *Beth-el* the Prophet returning, by *Mount Carmel*, to *Samaria*, found fresh Service there: Which was thus occasioned.

The *Moabites* had been *Tributaries* to *Israel* ever since *David* conquered them, 2 *Sam.* 8. 2. and continued so till *Abab's* Death. After which, in his Son *Abaziah's* Reign, they Rebelled, 2 *Kings* 1. 1. and *Abaziah*, having but a short Reign, and receiving that hurt by his fall, which hastened his Death, had not reduced them. The Tribute which the *Moabites* used to pay the Kings of *Israel*, was an Hundred Thousand Lambs, an Hundred Thousand Rams, with the Wool. This having been with-holden and denied ever since *Abab's* Death; *Jehoram*, a younger Son of *Abab*, succeeding his Brother *Abaziah* in the Kingdom of *Israel*, resolved to reduce *Moab* to their former Subjection by Arms. And in order thereunto, he not only mustered all *Israel* to the War; but sent to *Jehoshaphat*, the King of *Judah*, to invite him to go with him to Battle against *Moab*.

Jehoshaphat, tho' he had *smarted twice before* for the same thing, too easily yielded to join Forces, and go with *Jehoram*. And having ^{2 *Kin.* 3.} consulted together which way they should go up, and concluded to go through the Wilderness of *Edom*, they took the King of *Edom* also with them; who, tho' called a King, was indeed but a *Vice-Roy*, Lieutenant, or Deputy-king to *Jehoshaphat*, 1 *Kings* 22. 47. For *Edom* had been Tributary to *Judah*, ever since King *David* subdued them, 2 *Sam.* 8. 14. and yet, for a while, continued so.

Then setting forward, these three Kings fetcht a Compass, of Seven Days Journey, that they might come with the greater Advantage, upon the Backs of their Enemies: And thereby they ran themselves, and their Armies, into very great Streights and Dangers. For there was no Water in that Wilderness, to suffice the Host, and the Cattel that followed them, through so long a March. This put them to a stand. And the King of *Israel*, conscious of his own Evil ways, whereby he had provoked the Lord, cried out, Alas! the Lord hath delivered these Three Kings into the Hand of *Moab*.

But *Jehoshaphat* (who was a good Man, tho' too easily drawn into bad Company) having his Eye to God for Help, asked, *Is there not here a Prophet of the Lord, that we may enquire of the Lord by him?* Yes, said one of the King of *Israel's* Servants, Here is *Elisha* the Son of *Shaphat*, who poured Water on the Hands of *Elijah* (that is, waited on him as his Servant.) *Jehoshaphat* replying, *The Word of the Lord is with him*; the Three Kings went down together to him.

But when *Elisha* saw the King of *Israel* coming, What (said he) have I to do with thee? Get thee to the Prophets of thy Father, and to the Prophets of thy Mother, (the Prophets of *Baal*, and of the Groves.) Nay, said the King of *Israel*, *It is not for me only that we come to enquire*: But the Lord hath called these Three Kings together, to deliver them into the Hand of *Moab*. As the Lord of Hosts liveth, replied *Elisha*, before whom I stand, assuredly, were it not that I regard the Presence of *Jehoshaphat* King of *Judah*, I would not look towards thee, nor see thee.

The

A. M.
3109.

The Reason of this great *Aversion* in the Prophet from the King of ^{2 Kings 3.} *Israel*, was, that tho' he was *not quite so bad*, as his Father and his Mother; (for he had put away the Image of *Baal* which his Father had made:) yet *he wrought Evil* in the Sight of the Lord, and did cleave unto the Sins of *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*, who made *Israel* to sin (the *Calves*, and the *Separate Altar*) he departed not therefrom.

Yet for the sake of good *Jehoshaphat*, the Prophet called for a *Minstrel* (one that could play well on an Instrument of Musick, or sing *Divine Psalms*, often used in those times, both to cheer the Spirit of the Prophets, and *compose the Minds* of the Hearers to a *due attention*.) And while the *Minstrel* played, the *Hand of the Lord* (that is, his *Power*, and therein the *Gift of Prophecy*) *came upon the Prophet*; and he said, '*Thus saith the Lord*, make this *Valley* full of *Ditches*: For 'thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not see *Wind*; neither shall ye see ' *Rain*; yet that *Valley* shall be *filled with Water*, that ye may drink, ' both ye and your Cattel, and your Beasts. And this is but a *light* ' *thing* in the sight of the Lord: For he will deliver the *Moabites* also ' (whom ye go to fight against) into your Hand; and ye shall smite every ' *fenced City*, and every *choice City*, and shall fell every good *Tree*, and ' *stop all the Wells of Water*, and *mar every good piece of Land with* ' *Stones*; that is, ye shall *spare nothing*, but *quite destroy* the Country.

This Prediction was soon fulfilled: For next Morning, at the time when the Meat-Offering was offered, there came Water by the way of *Edom*, and the Country was filled with Water.

Mean while the *Moabites*, having got notice that these Kings were coming up to fight against them, had *mustered all their Forces*; and having *lifted* all that were able to bear Arms, stood ready to receive them, on the *Frontier* of the Kingdom. But when early in the Morning they saw the *Sunshine* upon the Waters, in a Place where they knew there never used to be any Water, they thought it was *Blood*, and the rather for that the Water (God so disposing it) appeared to them as red as Blood. Concluding therefore that the Kings were slain, and that the adverse Armies had smitten one another, they cried, *Moab, to the Spoil*: And made what haste they could to it.

But when they came to the Camp of *Israel*, they soon (*yet too late*) found their Mistake: For the *Israelites* sallying out upon them, smote the *Moabites*, and put them to Flight; and pursuing them into their own Country, slew them there. And beating down their Cities, made great *Devastation* in the Country; spoiling the Land, by casting every Man his Stone upon every good piece of Ground they came to; stopping up also the Wells of Water, and felling every goodly Tree, till they came to *Kir-haraseh*. This probably was a remarkable City, for Beauty, or for Strength, or both: For the Name imports a *Wall of Workmanship*.

Into this City, it seems, the King of *Moab* (whose Name was *Mesha*) had fled for Safety, with such of his scattered Forces, as, in this *general Rout*, he could rally: And here the *Confederate Armies* besieged him. The *Defence* he made secured this Place from being *razed*, as others were. So that, tho' it were, in a fort, *bombed*, the Slingers surrounding it, and shaking it; yet the *well-wrought Wall* stood.

But the King of *Moab*, hopeless to *maintain the Place* against so great a Force, taking with him Seven Hundred Men that drew Swords, made a *desperate Sally*; intending to break through on that side, where the King of *Edom* lay. But finding too strong a *Resistance*, he was fain to *retreat*; and shut himself up in the City again.

Then

Then filled with *Indignation* against *Israel*; and to let them see that he was resolved *never to yield the Place*, but he, and every Man of his, ^{2 Kin. 4.} to *die upon the Spot* first: He took his *Eldest Son*, who was to have reigned after him, and offered him for a *Burnt-offering* upon the Wall; that having thereby, as he supposed, pacified his offended Gods, he might succeed the better in the War afterwards. Some think (among whom are *Tremellius* and *Junius*, in their Annotation on *Amos* 1. 16. in them, but *Chap. 2. 1.* in the *English*) that it was not his own Son that the King of *Moab* thus Sacrificed; but the Son and Heir of the King of *Edom*, whom he had taken in the late Sally: But it seems more probable, that it was his own Son; and that mentioned in *Amos*, of his *burning the Bones* of the King of *Edom* into Lime, related to some other Fact and Time. But which soever it was, the Sight of so *barbarous a Cruelty*, had such a *compassionate Effect* on the Hearts of the *Confederate Armies*, that forthwith *raising the Siege*, they returned to their own Countries. Where leaving them, for a while, to rest and refresh themselves; let us, as the Course of the History leads, take notice of some more very remarkable Miracles, wrought by the Prophet *Elisha*, whether in the same order of time, wherein they are related or not.

Elisha being returned to *Samaria*, there came unto him a certain Woman, who was a Widow to one of the Sons of the Prophets, and thus bespake him. *Thy Servant my Husband is dead; and tho' he died in Debt, yet thou knowest he was one that feared the Lord; (and so did not run into Debt thro' Ill-husbandry or Evil Courses.) And not having left wherewith to pay, the Creditors come to take my Two Sons to be Bondmen.* A. M. 3109.

Elisha, commiserating the poor Woman's Condition, asked her *what he should do for her*; and bid her tell him, *what she had in the House*. Truly nothing, said she, *save a Pot of Oil*. Then said he, *Go, borrow thee good store of empty Vessels, of all thy Neighbours; and when thou hast brought them home, shut the Door upon thy self and thy Sons, and pour out thy Oil into all those Vessels, still setting them aside that are full.*

The Woman following the Prophet's Direction, went and borrowed Vessels; and shutting her self and her Sons in, they brought her the empty Vessels, and she poured out of her Oil into them: And as long as the Vessels held out, the Oil *encreasing* held out also; but when calling for another Vessel, her Son told her they were *all full*, the Oil *staid*. Then she going to the Man of God, and telling him what she had done, and what *Increase* she had of the Oil; he bid her *go sell the Oil, and pay her Debt, and then she and her Children should live of the rest*. A very good Lesson for Debtors to learn.

The next Account we have of this great Prophet is from *Shunem*, (a Town in the Tribe of *Issachar*, *Josh. 19. 18.*) where dwelt a Woman of great Note; whose Husband, being *ancient*, had left, it seems, the ordering of his Family much to his Wife. She observing *Elisha* to pass often that way, invited him one time to come in and eat with them; which he did: And finding a *kind Reception* from her Husband and her; he afterwards, as oft as he passed by, turned in thither to *refresh himself*.

After some time, the Woman, having Conversed with *Elisha*, and made her Observations thereupon, told her Husband, that she perceived this Guest of theirs who passed so often by them, was an *Holy Man of God*: And therefore she desired her Husband, that they might make a *little Chamber* upon the Wall; and set for him there a *Bed*, and a *Table*, and a *Stool*, and a *Candlestick* (Furniture for Use, not *Ostentation*, answering his *Conveniency*, not their *Grandieur*;) that so, whensoever he should come to them, he might take up his Lodging there. The Husband

consenting to his Wife's Proposal, the Chamber was forthwith fitted up: And the next time *Elisha* came thither, he was directed into that Chamber; and thenceforward took that for his Lodging.

Pleased with these kind and plain Accommodations, and having a grateful Mind to requite his Benefactors, *Elisha*, one time when he was in his Lodging, bid his Servant *Gebazi* speak to the *Shunamate* his Landlady, and let her know from him, he was sensible of her Kindness, in the Care she had taken for him; and would gladly answer it, in what he could: And therefore he should ask her, what might be done for her, and whether she would be spoken for to the King, or to the Captain of the Host, in any Case. *Gebazi* having delivered his Master's Message to her, she answered, *I dwell among my own People: Thereby intimating, that living lovingly with her Neighbours, she had no occasion to Complain, or seek Redress for any Thing.*

Gebazi reporting this her Answer to his Master, *Elisha* said to him, what then is to be done for her? Why, said *Gebazi*, *she hath no Child; and her Husband is old.* The Prophet, apprehending his meaning, bid him call her: And when she was come, and stood before him, he, without any Compliment, or Ceremonious Introduction, said unto her, *About this Season, according to the Course of Life, thou shalt embrace a Son.*

As this was quite beside her Expectation; so it is likely it might exceed her Belief: For the Answer she gave him was, *Nay, my Lord, thou Man of God, do not lie unto thy Handmaid (that is, do not put me in a vain Hope, and thereby deceive me.)* However, the Woman after this conceived, and in due time bare a Son, according as *Elisha* had predicted.

When this Child was grown up that he could run about, he went out one Morning, in the Harvest-time, to his Father, who was with his Reapers. There he had not been long ere he was taken with a sore Pain in his Head; which made him cry out, *My Head, my Head.* His Father thereupon ordered a Servant to carry him home to his Mother: Which the Servant doing, he sate upon his Mother's Knees till Noon, and then died. The afflicted Mother, seeing her only Child Dead, carried him up into the Chamber of the Man of God; and having laid him on his Bed, shut the Door, and came out: And calling to her Husband, desired him to send one of the young Men, and one of the Asses, that she might run to the Man of God, and come again. He, not understanding, or not duly considering the Urgency of the Occasion, asked her, why she would go that Day, it being neither *New Moon* nor *Sabbath* (which were the usual Days of going to enquire of the Lord in any Case, or to perform any publick Exercise of Religious Worship.) But she pressing to be gone, he sent her the Servant and the Ass; and she mounting, bid the Servant drive on, and go forward, and not slack his pace, unless she should bid him.

The Man of God was at *Carmel*, and happened to espie the Woman afar off, before she was come to him; and pointing to her, said to *Gebazi* his Servant, *Behold, yonder is that Shunamite: Run therefore now, I pray thee, to meet her; and ask her, If it be well with her, with her Husband, and with the Child.*

Away ran *Gebazi* to her: But she, not willing to spend time in entertaining Discourse with him, only answered, *Well;* and pressed on to the Prophet himself.

As soon as she was got to him, she fell down, and caught him by the Feet; which his Servant *Gebazi* seeing, came near to thrust her away: But his Master said, *Let her alone; for her Soul is vexed within her, and the Lord hath hid the Cause of it from me.*

The Woman by this time having a little recovered her Spirits, said unto him, *Did I desire a Son of my Lord? Did I not say, Do not deceive me?* ^{2 Kin. 4.}

Before she could bring forth any more, the Prophet apprehending the Matter, said to Gehazi, *Gird up thy Loins* (that is, thy Coat about thy Loins, that it may not hinder thy running) *and take my Staff in thy Hand, and go thy way. If thou meet any Man, salute him not; and if any Man salute thee, answer him not again* (that is, make no delay, nor lose any time; by stopping to speak with any Body on the way:) *And lay my Staff upon the Face of the Child.*

This probably might have wrought the Cure, had not the *Solicitous Mother* importunately pressed the Prophet to go with her; telling him positively, she would not go back without him: Which Resolution she bound with an *Asseveration*, commonly used in those times, saying, *As the Lord liveth, and as thy Soul liveth, I will not leave thee.* Whereupon he arose, and followed her.

Gehazi, observing his Master's Direction, had made so much haste, that he had laid the Staff on the Face of the Child; and finding thereupon no *Token*, or *Symptom* of Life, was coming back to his Master: And meeting him on the way, told him in a pretty significant Phrase, the Child was *not awaked*.

Elisha thereupon entring the House, and finding the Child lying dead upon his Bed, shut the Door upon them Two, and prayed unto the Lord. Then getting up upon the Bed, he lay upon the Child; and putting his Mouth upon the Child's Mouth, his Eyes upon its Eyes, and his Hands upon its Hands, he stretched himself upon the Child, (as his Master Eliab had once done, on a like Occasion, 1 Kings 17. 21.) and the *Flesh* of the Child waxed warm. Then walking a Turn or Two about the Chamber, he got up again, and having in like manner stretched himself again upon the Child, the Child *Neezed* Seven times, and opened its Eyes.

Elisha then bid his Servant call the Mother; and she upon the call, quickly coming, he bid her take up her Son. At which Word the *overjoyed Mother* falling down at the Prophet's Feet, and bowing her self to the Ground, in *Reverence* to that *Divine Power*, thro' which so great a *Miracle* was wrought, and by which she had received so great a *Benefit*; took up the Child, and departed.

The Prophet also departed, and went to Gilgal, where was at that time a *Dearth*; and the Sons (that is, the *Disciples*, or *Schollars*) of the Prophets (who were many in Number) sitting before him, he bid his Servant set on the *great Pot*, and seeth *Pottage* for them. One of them thereupon going forth into the Field, to gather *Herbs* for the Pottage, found a *Wild Vine* (so it is rendred, but is supposed to be the same which *Herbalists* call *Colloquintida*, which hath a strong *purging Quality*;) And of this having gathered his Lapful, came and thred them into the Pot of Pottage; not knowing the Nature of them. When the Pottage was sod, they poured out for the Men to eat. But as they were eating, finding some *ill effect* thereof upon them, they gave over eating, and cryed out, *O thou Man of God, There is Death in the Pot.* Then said he, *Bring some Meal*; which being brought, he cast into the Pot, and said, *Pour out now for the People, that they may eat*: And then they did eat without harm.

While the Prophet tarried here, with the Sons of the Prophets, there came a Man from Baal-shalisha, and brought him *Bread* of the *First-fruits*, Twenty Loaves of Barley, and some full *Ears* of Corn in the Husk. The Prophet, knowing Food was short among them, bid his Servant set it before the People, that they might eat. The Servant (*wanting Faith*, the want of which brings often with it *want of Obedience*)

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3110.

^{2 Kin. 4.} consenting to his Wife's Proposal, the Chamber was forthwith fitted up: And the next time *Elisha* came thither, he was directed into that Chamber; and thenceforward *took that for his Lodging*.

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This probably might have wrought the Cure, had not the *Solicitous Mother* importunately pressed the Prophet to go with her; telling him positively, she would not go back without him: Which Resolution she bound with an *Asseveration*, commonly used in those times, saying, *As the Lord liveth, and as thy Soul liveth, I will not leave thee.* Whereupon he arose, and followed her.

Gehazi, observing his Master's Direction, had made so much haste, that he had laid the Staff on the Face of the Child; and finding thereupon no *Token*, or *Symptom* of Life, was coming back to his Master: And meeting him on the way, told him in a pretty significant Phrase, the Child was *not awaked*.

Elisba thereupon entring the House, and finding the Child lying dead upon his Bed, shut the Door upon them Two, and prayed unto the Lord. Then getting up upon the Bed, he lay upon the Child; and putting his Mouth upon the Child's Mouth, his Eyes upon its Eyes, and his Hands upon its Hands, he stretched himself upon the Child, (as his Master Eliab had once done, on a like Occasion, 1 Kings 17. 21.) and the *Flesh* of the Child waxed warm. Then walking a Turn or Two about the Chamber, he got up again, and having in like manner stretched himself again upon the Child, the Child *Neezed* Seven times, and opened its Eyes.

Elisba then bid his Servant call the Mother; and she upon the call, quickly coming, he bid her take up her Son. At which Word the *overjoyed Mother* falling down at the Prophet's Feet, and bowing her self to the Ground, in *Reverence* to that *Divine Power*, thro' which so great a *Miracle* was wrought, and by which she had received so great a *Benefit*; took up the Child, and departed.

The Prophet also departed, and went to Gilgal, where was at that time a *Dearth*; and the Sons (that is, the *Disciples*, or *Schollars*) of the Prophets (who were many in Number) sitting before him, he bid his Servant set on the *great Pot*, and seeth Pottage for them. One of them thereupon going forth into the Field, to gather *Herbs* for the Pottage, found a *Wild Vine* (so it is rendred, but is supposed to be the same which *Herbalists* call *Colloquintida*, which hath a strong *purging Quality*;) And of this having gathered his Lapful, came and thred them into the Pot of Pottage; not knowing the Nature of them. When the Pottage was sod, they poured out for the Men to eat. But as they were eating, finding some *ill effect* thereof upon them, they gave over eating, and cryed out, *O thou Man of God, There is Death in the Pot.* Then said he, *Bring some Meal*; which being brought, he cast into the Pot, and said, *Pour out now for the People, that they may eat*: And then they did eat without harm.

While the Prophet tarried here, with the Sons of the Prophets, there came a Man from Baal-shalisha, and brought him *Bread* of the *First-fruits*, Twenty Loaves of Barley, and some full *Ears* of Corn in the Husk. The Prophet, knowing Food was short among them, bid his Servant set it before the People, that they might eat. The Servant (*wanting Faith*, the want of which brings often with it *want of Obedience*)

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dience) said, *To what Purpose should I set this before an Hundred Men?* But, said the Prophet again, Give the People that they may eat: For thus saith the Lord, *They shall eat, and shall leave thereof.* Upon this he set it before them; and they did eat, and left thereof; according to the Word of the Lord.

Before *Elisha* left them, these Sons of the Prophets, addressing themselves to him, shewed him that the Place where they dwelt (at that time with him) was *too streight*, so that they wanted Room. Wherefore they desired him to let them go to *Jordan*, and from the Banks thereof fetch every one a *Beam*, or Piece of Timber, that they might therewith make them a more commodious Place to dwell in. He bid them go: But they, not being willing to go without him, one of them said to him, *Vouchsafe, I pray thee, to go with thy Servants.* He consenting, went with them: And being come to *Jordan*, they fell to work to cut down Timber. But as one of them was *felling a Tree* for a Beam (it seems, with a borrowed Ax) the *Ax-head*, dropping off from the *Helve*, fell into the Water. At which the Workman crying out, *Alas, Master! for it was borrowed;* the Man of God asked him, *Where it fell?* And when the Workman had shewed him the Place, the Man of God cutting a *Stick*, and casting it in there, immediately *the Ax did swim*: So that the Workman by the Prophet's Direction, put forth his Hand, and took it up.

Elisha now returning to *Samaria*, found his Presence was needed there, by reason of an *extraordinary Case*, which thus happened.

Naaman, Captain General of the Host of the King of *Syria*, a Man much renowned for his Valour, and in great esteem with the King his Master, was a *Leper*. And the *Syrians*, upon some Excursion which they had made upon *Israel*, having brought out of the Land of *Israel*, amongst other Captives, a little Maid, who waited on *Naaman's* Wife; she one Day, discoursing with her *Mistress* about her Lord's Disease, happened to say, *Would God, my Lord was with the Prophet that is in Samaria: For he would recover him of his Leprosie.*

One that over-heard this, went and told the King, what this *Israelitish* Maid had said: Whereupon the King put *Naaman* upon going; offering to give him his *Letters of Recommendation* to the King of *Israel*. *Naaman* thereupon, taking with him a very Noble Present for the Prophet, viz. Ten Talents of Silver (amounting at Three Hundred Seventy Five Pounds each, to Three Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty Pounds) and Six Thousand Picces of Gold (supposed to be Shekels, which, at Fifteen Shillings a Piece, came to Four Thousand Five Hundred Pounds) and besides all this, Ten Changes of Raiment; he left *Damascus*, and took his Journey for *Samaria*, then the Royal Seat of the Kings of *Israel*.

Being come thither, he delivered his Letter; the Contents whereof (so far as related to this Business) ran thus.

'Now when this Letter is come unto thee, Behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my Servant to thee, that thou mayst recover him of his Leprosie.'

When the King of *Israel* had read the Letter, not knowing the occasion upon which it was written, but suspecting a *Design* to lie under it; he rent his Cloaths, and cried out, *Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this Man doth send to me, to recover a Man of his Leprosie?* Wherefore consider, I pray you, said he to his Servants, and see how he seeketh an occasion of Quarrel against me.

The Report of this strange sort of Letter, and of the King's Trouble on the Reading of it, quickly came to the Prophet *Elisha's* Ear; who there-

thereupon sent this Message to the King: *Let the Leper come to me; and he shall know that there is a Prophet in Israel.* 2 Kin. 5.

The King, glad to be thus eased, referred Naaman to the Prophet. Who thereupon coming with his Chariot and Horses, stood at the Door of Elisha's House, expecting some great Ceremonious and Formal Performances from him. But the Prophet, quite contrary, not so much as going forth to see or speak with him, sent him only this Message, *Go and wash in Jordan Seven times, and thy Flesh shall come again unto thee, and thou shalt be clean.*

This so great Disappointment of his Expectation, put Naaman into such a Passion, that in great Wrath he went away, saying, *I thought he would surely have come out to me, and have stood, and called on the Name of the Lord his God, and have moved his Hand to and fro over the Place; and so have recovered the Leper. What does he tell me of Jordan? Are not Abana and Pharpar, Rivers of Damascus, better than all the Waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned, and went away in a Rage.* But after some time, when his Anger was a little abated, his Servants coming to him, entreated him to consider, whether if the Prophet had bid him do some great thing, he would not have done it: And how much more reasonable it was, when the Prophet only bid him wash, for him to do so small a Thing, in order to be cleansed.

By their Importunity and Reasoning perswaded, he at length went down; and having dipped himself Seven times in Jordan, his Flesh came again, like unto the Flesh of a little Child: And he was clean, according to the Saying of the Man of God.

Then returning with all his Retinue, to the Man of God, he came, and standing before him said, *Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the Earth, but the God of Israel. Now therefore, I pray, (seeing by thy means I have received so great a Benefit from him) take thou a Blessing (that is, a Present) of thy Servant.* The Prophet, not mercenary, answered; *As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand (or, whose Servant I am) I will not receive any.* And tho' Naaman urged him to take it; yet he utterly refused.

Naaman then, protesting that he would thenceforth offer neither Burnt-offering nor Sacrifice unto other Gods, but only to the Lord; desired of the Prophet that he might have Two Mules Burden of Earth, to carry home with him: Zealously, but ignorantly thinking, either that there was some inherent Holiness in the Earth of that Country; or that the God of Israel would not be sacrificed unto upon any other Earth than the Earth of Israel.

But because he had now declared that he would never more worship any other God, but the Lord; he deprecates an Offence that might arise, from his going into the House of Rimmon (the Idol of the Syrians) with his Master, when he went thither to worship. *In this thing (said he to the Prophet) the Lord pardon thy Servant, that when my Master goeth into the House of Rimmon; and he leaning on my Hand, I bow my self in the House of Rimmon; when, on that occasion, I bow my self in the House of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy Servant in this thing.* All the Answer the Prophet gave him was, *Go in peace:* Which was among the Israelites, a common Form of Valediction. And with it Naaman departed.

From these Words of Naaman, and the Prophet's Answer, a Dispute hath arisen, whether Naaman's bowing in the House of Rimmon, tho' not with an intent to worship the Idol (but only to accommodate himself

to his Master's *Posture*, who leaned on him, while he bowed himself in Worship to the Idol) was a Sin, or no.

^{2 Kin. 5.} Those *Time-serving* Ministers of State, and others, who are willing to *sail with every Wind of worldly Preferment* excuse it, as allowed (in their Opinion) by the Prophet's saying, *Go in Peace*.

But others, seeing the *Danger* of such a *Politick Conformity*, and willing to *foreclose the way* thereto, read the Words in the *Prater-Tense*; which varying the *Version* from [*when my Master goeth into, &c. and I bow,*] to [*when my Master went into, &c. and I bowed,*] make the Sense of the Words to be a *Craving Pardon* for a Sinful Practice in times past: Not a *License* to continue it in time to come. See Godwyn's *Moses and Aaron*; l. 4. c. 7. p. 181. and Dan. Dyke's *Deceitfulness of Man's Heart*, p. 184.

Naaman was no sooner gone, but Gebazi, the Prophet Elisha's Servant (whose *Fingers itched* to be handling some of Naaman's Money and Raiment) said within himself, *Tho' my Master hath spared this Syrian, in not receiving at his Hand that Present which he brought; yet I will surely run after him, and take somewhat of him*. Accordingly he followed Naaman, while he was yet got but a little way: and Naaman, turning, and seeing him running after him, out of respect to his Master, alighting from his Chariot, went to meet him; and asked him, *Is all well?* Yes, said Gebazi, *all is well*. But forging a Message in his Master's Name, he added, *My Master hath sent me to acquaint thee, that even now (since thou leftst him) there are come to him from Mount Ephraim, Two young Men of the Sons of the Prophets; to whom he desires thee to give a Talent of Silver, and Two Changes of Garments*.

^{2 Kin. 6.} Naaman, glad of this Opportunity, to gratifie (as he thought) the Man of God, said to Gebazi, *Let me perswade thee to take Two Talents*: and pressing him to take them, he bound up Two Talents (being Seven Hundred and Fifty Pounds) in Two Bags, with Two Changes of Garments; and sent Two of his Servants with Gebazi, to carry them for him. They had not far to go, before they came to the Tower: Where Gebazi, taking the Loading from the Servants, disposed it in a private Place, and sent them back after their Master.

Then reckoning all was *safe*, in went he, and stood before his Master, as he used to do. His Master, by a *Divine Revelation*, knowing where he had been, and what he had done, asked him, *Whence he came?* He, to excuse himself by another Lie, answered, *Thy Servant went no whither*. No, replied his Master, *Went not my Heart with thee, when the Man turned again from his Chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive Money, and to receive Garments, or any other Gifts?* Of which he enumerated divers sorts. *Since therefore thou hast coveted the Things of Naaman, the Leprosie of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy Seed for ever*.

This *Divine Sentence*, pronounced by the Prophet, as a *due Punishment* to Gebazi, for both his *Covetousness* and *Lying*, immediately seized upon him: So that he went out, from the Presence of his Master, a *Leper, white as Snow*.

Some time after this, the King of Syria making War upon Israel, and consulting and concluding with his Servants in what place to pitch his Camp against them; Elisha sent word to the King of Israel, to warn him, that he should beware not to pass such a Place: For thither the Syrians were come down, and lay in wait for him. And this the Prophet did, more than once or twice. By which means the King of Israel, sending to the Place, and finding it was so, *escaped the danger*; and the King of Syria's Designs upon him were *disappointed* and defeated.

This

This so troubled the King of Syria, that calling his Servants together, he said to them, *Will ye not shew me which of us is for the King of Israel; 2 Kin. 6. and who it is among us, that discovers our Counsels to him.* Upon that one of his Servants (who perhaps might have been at Samaria with Naaman) replied, *It is none of us, My Lord, O King: But Elisha the Prophet, who is in Israel, telleth the King of Israel the Words that thou speakest in thy Bed-chamber.*

Then said the King, *Go, and spie where he is, that I may send a Party of Horse to seize him, and bring him hither.* Why, said one of his Servants, *He is at this time at Dothan,* (a little City, not far from Samaria.) The King thereupon sent Horses and Chariots, and a strong Party; which came by Night, and compassed the City about.

Early next Morning, when the Prophet's Servant (probably a new one, for we read no more of Gehazi's being with him, after that, for his Wickedness he was smitten with the *Leprosie*) was got up, and gone abroad, he saw the Host encompassing the City with both Horses and Chariots. Wherefore hastening to his Master, he cried out, *Alas, my Master! how shall we do?* His Master bid him, not be afraid: *For they* (said he) *that be with us, are more than they that be with them.*

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And to convince him of it, he prayed to the Lord to open his Servant's Eyes that he might see it. The Lord answered the Prophet's Prayer; and the young Man's Eyes being opened, he saw the Mountain full of Horses and Chariots of Fire round about Elisha.

The Syrians thinking they had Elisha safe, came down to seize upon him. But Elisha praying again, that the Lord would smite them with Blindness; they were so blinded, that they did not know Elisha, when he came to them. He thereupon telling them, that was not the way, nor that the City they should go to, bid them follow him, and he would bring them to the Man whom they sought. They following him, he led them to Samaria: And having brought them into the City, he prayed the Lord to open their Eyes, that they might see where they were; and their Sight being restored, they saw themselves in the midst of Samaria, and in the Hands of their Enemies.

The King of Israel would gladly have taken the Advantage to have cut off so many of his Enemies: But not daring to do it without consulting the Prophet, he asked him, *My Father, shall I smite them? shall I smite them?* No, by no means, said the Prophet: For if they had been taken as Prisoners of War, yet after Quarter given, thou wouldst not have slain them; much less then shouldst thou slay these, whom thou hast not taken in War. Rather, said he, set Food before them; that having eat and drunk, they may return to their Master, and report to him the good usage they have had. The Prophet's Counsel took place: And the Syrian Soldiers, being well entertained, were peaceably dismissed.

Some think this kind Treatment disposed the Syrians to a more peaceable Temper, and to be quiet Neighbours afterwards: Because it follows in the Text, *So the Bands of Syria came no more into the Land of Israel.* Others think it only made the Syrians more wary, how they ventured to make their Incursions and Inroads upon Israel with single Brigades, or in small Bands; but that they came afterwards in fuller Armies: Because the next Verse tells us, that Ben-hadad King of Syria, after this, (how long after is somewhat uncertain, but certainly it could not be very long after, for Ben-hadad did not live long after) having gathered all his Host together, went up and besieged Samaria.

This was a very strait Siege, and brought the Besieged to great Distress. For as the Siege caused a great Famine in Samaria: So the long Continu-

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ance of it encreased the *Famine* to that height, that an *Ass's Head* was
 2 Kin. 6. sold for *Fourscore Pieces of Silver* (which being taken for common *Shekels*, and valued at *Fifteen Pence* a piece, came to *Five Pounds of Sterling Money*;) and the *Fourth part* of a *Kab* (or *Quart*) of *Dove's Dung* was sold for *Five Pieces* (or *Shekels*) of *Silver*, or *Six Shillings Three Pence*.

But every one, among the *Besieged*, was not able to pay after this Rate, if the *Commodity* had been to be had. So that the poorer sort of People were driven to the utmost *Extremity*, as the following *Instance* will manifest. For as the King of *Israel* was passing by upon the Wall, there cryed a Woman unto him, saying, *Help my Lord, O King*, He thinking she would importune him for *Bread*, answered her somewhat roughly, *If the Lord do not help thee? whence shall I help thee? Out of the Barn-floor? or out of the Wine-press?* This fretful Answer did not satisfy the Woman; but it seems, she continued her Cry to the King, which made him ask her, *What ailed her?* Whereupon she thus opened her Complaint.

This Woman (pointing to another) said unto me, Give thy Son that we may eat him to day; and we will eat my Son to morrow. So we boiled my Son, and did eat him: And on the next day I said to her, Give thy Son, that we may eat him; and she hath hid her Son.

Tho' this was but one of those Judgments, which *Moses* had long before told the *Israelites* should fall upon them, *Deut.* 28. 53. if they rebelled against the Lord (as these had done;) And therefore might have been the less surprizing: Yet it being a thing so abhorrent from Nature, for Parents to feed upon the *Flesh* of their own Children, the King upon hearing thereof was so struck, that he rent his Clothes; whereby the People, that were present, perceived that he had *Sackcloth* underneath upon his *Flesh*.

But tho' he had on him the outward Signs of Sorrow, he had not in him the Signs of true Repentance. For flying out most fiercely against the Prophet *Elisha*, as if he had been Instrumental to bring this Distress upon them, he swore he would take off *Elisha's Head* that day: And forthwith sent an Officer to do it, himself also following him.

Elisha mean while, sitting in his House, with the Elders about him, had this Design against his Life revealed to him by the Spirit of the Lord. And thereupon, before the Officer came, he said to the Elders, See ye how this Son of a Murderer (meaning *Ahab*, the Father of this King, who had slain *Naboth*, and other good Men) hath sent to take away mine Head? Look when the Messenger comes, that ye shut the Door, and keep him out a while (till I have delivered the Message I have from the Lord:) For is not the sound of his Master's Feet behind him?

He had scarce done speaking before the Messenger came; whom the Elders entertaining at the Door with Discourse (and endeavouring to convince him that this grievous *Famine*, and the Misery that attended it, was not an accidental thing, but an evident Judgment, sent by God upon them for their Sins) he, or perhaps the King rather (who following him, might by this time be come up to them) in a desperate Mind said, Nay! If this Evil be of the Lord, what should I wait for (or trust in) the Lord any longer?

The Prophet *Elisha* hearing this, could contain no longer; but cried
 1 Kin. 7. out, Hear ye the Word of the Lord: Thus saith the Lord, To morrow about this time, shall a Measure (which *Godwyn* explains to be a Gallon and half, or Six Quarts) of fine Flower be sold for a *Shekel* (or Fifteen Pence) and Two Measures of Barley for a *Shekel*.

A Lord

A Lord that was present (on whole Hand the King leaned) hearing this, and counting it an *extravagant* Word, and *impossible* to be performed, considering the shortness of the time prefixed for it, said in derision, *If the Lord would make Windows in Heaven* (to pour Grain down upon them) *could this thing be?*

This *Incredulity* of his, aggravated by his *Contempt* of what the Prophet had delivered in the Name of the Lord, made the Prophet give him this short Answer; *Thou shalt see it with thine Eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.*

How such a *Plentiful Supply* of Food should be brought to *Samaria*, in so short a time, the Enemy having begirt it with a *close Siege*, and thereby cut off all *Avenues*; was indeed beyond the reach of Man's *Comprehension*: But God hath *secret ways* of working, which till he discovers them, are past finding out. And thus the thing was brought about.

There were at this time Four *Leprous Men*, that sat at the entering in of the Gate of *Samaria*. They were forced to be *without the Gate*, because of their *Leprosie*; that they might not *infect* others, *Levit. 13. 46.* And they were willing to be as *near the Gate* as they might, because of the *Enemy*, that they might be in *Safety*. If the *Famine* was so hard *within*, it cannot be supposed these poor Lepers could fare well *without*. When therefore they had sat there, till they were almost *pined to death*, they said one to another, *Why sit we here until we die? If we should attempt to enter the City, and could get in, the Famine being so strong in the City, we should die there: And if we sit still here, we shall die also. Now therefore come, let us fall into the Host of the Syrians? If they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die.*

Thus resolved, they rose up in the *Twilight* (for they durst not be seen to go to the Enemy,) and to the Camp of the *Syrians* they went; expecting no doubt, to have been *seized by the Sentinels* or Out-guards. But when they came to the uttermost part of the Camp of *Syria*, they found no Man there.

For in the Night, the Lord had caused the *Syrian Host* to hear a noise of Chariots and of Horses, as if there had been a *great Army* coming upon them. At which terrified, they said one to another, *Lo the King of Israel hath hired against us the Kings of the Hittites, and of the Egyptians; and they are come upon us.* Having with this Apprehension frightened one another, they arose and fled in the *Twilight*, leaving their Tents, with their Horses, and their Asses tied as they were, even the whole Camp just as it was, and *ran for their Lives*.

When these *Lepers* had passed through the Camp, and found the Coast clear; the first thing they did, was to *satisfie their Hunger*. Wherefore entering into one Tent, they eat and drank till they had filled their Bellies: And then carrying out *Silver*, and *Gold*, and *Raiment*, went and hid it. Then coming again, they entered another Tent; and carrying thence also, they went and hid that too.

At length, remembering themselves, they said one to another, *We do not well: For this is a Day of good Tidings, and we hold our Peace. If we tarry till the Morning, some Mischief will come upon us: Now therefore come, Let us go tell the King's Household.*

Returning then to the Gate of *Samaria*, they called to the Porter, and told him the good News: He told it to the rest of the Porters; and they carried it to the King's Household within.

The King thereupon arose. But suspecting it to be but a *Stratagem of War*, said to his Servants; *I will now shew you what the Syrians have done*

to us. They know we are Hungry: Therefore to entice us out of the City,
 2 Kin. 7. they are gone out of their Camp, and have hid themselves in the Fields,
 with Design, when we come out, to catch us alive, and so get into
 the City.

To prevent that, (said one of his Servants) Let some take, I pray thee,
Five of the Horses that remain (which will be no great hazard: For
 the Horses, like the People, are almost pined to Death;) and let us send,
 and see whether it be so or no.

This Counsel being approved, they mounted Two Men upon Two
 of their Chariot-Horses, and the King sent them after the Host of the
 Syrians, to discover what Course they had taken.

These Scouts having traced them as far as *Jordan*, and found the way
 full of Garments and Vessels (which the Syrians, to lighten them-
 selves, had cast away in their *hasty Flight*) returned, and told the King
 so. Whereupon the People, glad of this *unexpected Deliverance*, went
 out to *ransack* the Tents of the Syrians. Where, besides great Riches,
 such *store of Provisions* for Food was found, that it being brought into *Sa-*
maria, a Measure of fine Flower was sold for a Shekel, and Two Mea-
 sures of Barley for a Shekel, according to the Word of the Lord by *Elisha*.

That these Stores might not be *imbezelled* and wasted, nor the People
 be disorderly in taking them, the King appointed that Lord, on whose
 Hand he leaned (and who had before *slighted* the Prophet's Prediction)
 to have the Charge of the Gate, thro' which the *Spoil* of the Syrian
 Camp was to be brought in. But the *Hunger-bitten* People, impa-
 tient of delay, and pressing hard to come at that they so much wanted,
trod upon that Lord in the Gate, and killed him; so that, tho' he *saw*
the Plenty, yet he *tasted not of it*, as the Man of God had before told
 him. And this *just Punishment* came upon him, not only for his *In-*
credulity, but for his *Contempt* of the Word of the Lord, by his Servant
 the Prophet.

Tho' *Samaria* by reason of the *Siege*, was most pressed with this Fa-
 mine: Yet all the Land of *Israel* felt it, for Seven Years together. Of
 2 Kin. 8. which the Prophet *Elisha* gave timely notice unto that *Shunamitish* Wo-
 man, who had so *kindly entertained* him, and whose Son he had before
 restored to Life; advising her to go, with her Household, and So-
 journ where she could, until the *Famine* should be over.

She, thus forewarned by the Man of God, went with her Household,
 into the Land of the *Philistines*; and sojourned there, during the
 time of the *Famine* in *Israel*, which lasted Seven Years. But when
 the Seven Years were ended, and the *Famine* was over; returning to
 her own Country again, she found her House and Land possessed by
 others, who, in her absence, had entred thereinto. So that she was
 fain to *address her self* to the King, and pray to be restored to her
 Estate.

Coming for that end to the Court, she found the King talking with
Gebazi (the old Servant of the Prophet *Elisha*;) who, at the King's
 Command, was recounting unto him the great Things his Master the
 Prophet had done: And in the course of his Narration, was just then
 relating, how his Master had *restored a dead Body to Life* (meaning the
 Son of this Woman) when the Woman, with her Son, came in, to pre-
 sent her *Petition* to the King. Whereupon *Gebazi* told the King, that
 this was the Woman he had been speaking of; and this was her Son
 whom *Elisha* had restored to Life.

This fell out very *opportunately*, and happily for the poor Woman.
 For the King, who before was taken with the Relation, was now so
 affected with the *Providence*, that had brought the Woman and her Son

to his Presence; whereby he had the Opportunity of seeing, and conversing with a Person that had been Dead, and was raised again to Life : 2 *King. 8.* That after he had enquired of the Woman about it, and had received from her a *Confirmation of the Truth* thereof, he gave charge to one of his *Officers*, not only to put the Woman into Possession of her whole Estate again, but to restore her all the *mean Profits* thereof, from the time she had left the Land until that Day.

About this time *Ben-hadad*, King of Syria, was sick; and hearing that the Prophet *Elisha* was come to *Damascus* (which was then the Royal City of Syria) he bid *Hazael*, one of his Servants, take a *Present* with him, and go meet the Man of God: And by him enquire of the Lord, whether he should recover of that Disease. A. M. 3118.

Hazael thereupon, taking a *Royal Present*, Forty Camels Burden of the choice Things of *Damascus* (a *Present fitter for a Prince to make, than for a Prophet of God to receive*) went to meet *Elisha*. And setting himself before him, said, *Thy Son Ben-hadad, King of Syria, hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this Disease? Go tell him,* answered *Elisha, he may certainly recover. Howbeit,* added he, *The Lord hath shewed me that he shall surely die.*

In which Answer, tho' at the first Sight there may seem to be somewhat like a *Contradiction*, yet rightly taken, there is none. For the former part of the Answer [*thou mayst certainly Recover,*] related to the Nature of his Disease, which of it self was not Mortal, but Curable; the latter part [*he shall surely die*] related to the foreknowledge, the Prophet had received from God, of the *Treachery Hazael* would use against him; whereby he would surely take away his Life, to make way for his own *Accession to the Crown*.

The Sense whereof, and of the Mischief he would afterwards do to *Israel*, caused the Prophet, with a *settled Countenance*, to look stedfastly on *Hazael*, till *Hazael* was ashamed, and the Man of God wept.

Of which *Hazael* taking notice, asked, *Why weepeth my Lord? Because,* answered the Prophet, *I know the Evil that thou wilt do unto the Children of Israel. For their Strong-holds wilt thou set on Fire, their young Men wilt thou slay with the Sword, and wilt dash their Children in pieces, and rip up their Women with Child.*

But what! replied *Hazael, is thy Servant a Dog, that he should do this great thing? Wherein he seems to express an Abhorrence of so great an Inhumanity. And perhaps designed withal, to invalidate the Prophet's Words, by intimating how unlikely it was, that he, a private Man of no great Condition (and therefore represents himself but as a Dog) should be able to achieve such great Matters: For the Prophet answered, The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be King over Syria.*

This was enough for *Hazael*. Away he went from *Elisha*, and returning to the King his Master, reported the Prophet's Answer wrong. For whereas the Prophet bid him say to his Master, *Thou mayest certainly recover*; he, when his Master asked him what the Prophet said to him, replied, he told me that *thou shouldest surely recover*. But to make sure that he might not recover, he on the Morrow took a thick Cloth, and having dipt it in Water, spread it upon the Sick King's Face; so that, being therewith stifled, he died: And *Hazael*, thereupon usurping the Throne, reigned in his stead. 2 Chr. 21.

Having spent some time in *Israel* and *Syria*: Let us now look back into *Judah*; and see how Things went there.

Jehoshaphat, the good King of *Judah* was now dead, leaving his Son *Jehoram* (whom Four Years before he had taken into a *Participation* of the Government) in sole Possession of the Throne of *Judah*. But far unlike

^{2 Kin. 8.} ^{2 Chr. 21.} *unlike to his Father was he: For he walked in the way of the Kings of Israel, like as did the House of Ahab, and wrought that which was Evil in the Eyes of the Lord. For which this Reason is given, That he had the Daughter of Ahab to Wife. So dangerous a thing it is, to take a Wife out of a wicked Family.*

So far did this *Jehoram* forsake the Lord God of his Fathers, that he made *High-places* in the Mountains of *Judah*, and caused the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem* to commit Fornication, and compelled *Judah* thereunto. And so *unnaturally cruel* was he, that to strengthen himself in his Government, he *slew all his Brethren*, the other Sons of his Father *Jehoshaphat*, Six in Number; with divers also of the Princes.

But he went not either *unreproved*, or *unpunished*. For there came a Writing to him, from *Elijah* the Prophet (as the Text hath it) who had been *translated* some Years before (if from the likeness of the Names, *Elijah* hath not crept into the Text, instead of *Elisha*, who was then living. But *Tremellius* and *Junius* say, *Elijah* writ it by *Prophetical Foresight*, before he was translated, and left it for him.) However it was, the Contents of the Writing was thus.

‘ Thus saith the Lord God of *David* thy Father. Because thou hast
‘ not walked in the ways of *Jehoshaphat* thy Father, nor in the ways of
‘ *Asa* King of *Judah*; but hast walked in the way of the Kings of
‘ *Israel*, and hast made *Judah*, and the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, to go
‘ a Whoring, like to the Whoredoms of the House of *Ahab*, and also hast
‘ slain thy Brethren of thy Father’s House, who were better than thy
‘ self: Behold, with a great Plague will the Lord smite thy People, and
‘ thy Children, and thy Wives, and all thy Goods; and thou shalt also
‘ have great Sickness, by Disease of thy Bowels, until thy Bowels fall
‘ out, by reason of the continual Sickness.

Very great, and very particular are the Punishments here denounced against this wicked King, for his great and very particular Sins. All which came on him *successively*, in a little time, to the full completing of the Sentence given.

For first, in his Days the *Edomites* (whom King *David* had subdued, *2 Sam. 8. 14.* and who from that time to this, had no King of their own; but were governed by a *Vice-Roy*, or Deputy, set over them, *1 Kings 22. 47.*) revolted from under the Dominion of *Judah*, and made themselves a King. And tho’ *Jehoram* went forth against them, with his Princes, and all his Chariots with him; and setting upon the *Edomites* by Night did some small Execution upon them: Yet did *Edom* maintain the Revolt, and was never reduced under Subjection to *Judah* any more. Whereby the Prophecy of the Patriarch *Isaac* (the Father of both *Edom* and *Israel*) foretelling both *Edom’s* Subjection to *Israel*; and his breaking afterwards *Jacob’s* Yoke from off his Neck, *Gen. 27. 40.* seems to have been in great part completed.

At the same time that *Edom* thus revolted, revolted also *Libnah*, a City and Territory of good Account; which in *Joshua’s* time had a King of its own, *Josh. 10. 29, 30.* and was afterwards given to the Children of *Aaron*, for a City of Refuge for the Man-slayer, *Josh. 21. 13.*

And to afflict him the more, the Lord stirred up against *Jehoram* the Spirit of the *Philistines*, and of the *Arabians* that bordered upon the *Ethiopians*. These coming against *Judah*, brake into *Jerusalem*, and carried away all the Substance that was found in the King’s House; together with his Wives, and his Sons: So that he had never a Son left him save *Jehoahaz*, the youngest of his Sons; who is also called *Abaziah*, *2 Chron. 22. 1.* and *Azariah*, *ver. 6.*

Thus

Thus was the Punishment denounced against *Jehoram* fulfilled upon him, in his People, in his Wives, in his Children, and in his Goods. ^{2 Kin. 8.} That part only remained, which related to his Person. For the Accomplishment whereof after all the rest, the Lord smote him in his Bowels, with an incurable Disease. Under which when he had laboured Two whole Years, his Bowels, by reason of his violent Sickness, fell out; leaving him, who had no Bowels of Compassion towards his own Brethren (whom he slew) without Bowels to sustain Life in himself. ^{2 Chr. 22.}

Thus died *Jehoram* King of *Judah* (a bad Son of a good Father) without being desired; which his People shewed by making no burning for him, like the burning for his Fathers (which was done with Perfumes and Sweet Odours of Spices:) Yet they buried him in the City of *David*, tho' not in the Sepulchres of the Kings. His Reign is determined Eight Years: But of those, he is supposed to have reigned Four as *Co-Rex* with his Father; and the other Four as *Sole-Rex*, by himself.

To him succeeded his youngest Son *Abaziah* (called also *Azariah*, ^{2 Chron. 22. 6.} and *Jeboahaz*, chap. 21. 17.) all his other Sons being slain before, in their Father's Life-time, by the Arabian Army, that invaded *Judah*, *ibid.* But some Diversity there is in the Account of his Age, when he came to the Crown, as it is delivered in the Books of *Kings* and *Chronicles*. For in *2 Kings* 8. 26. we read, *Abaziah* was Two and Twenty Years old when he began to reign. But in *2 Chron.* 22. 2. we read *Abaziah* was Forty and Two Years old when he began to reign.

To accommodate this Difference, some have imagined, that he was made King while his Father reigned, and after his Father's Death was confirmed King, when he was Forty and Two Years old. And this way the Marginal Note in the Bishop's Bible, on *2 Kings* 8. 26. says, It is to be understood. But they who made that Note, did not I doubt, consider, that if *Abaziah* was but Two and Twenty Years old, when he began to reign, since his Father reigned but Eight Years, if he had been made King in the first Year of his Father (which he could not) that would not have brought him to, nor near, Two and Forty Years old at his Father's Death.

Others have other Conjectures. Some would have the Two and Forty Years in *2 Chron.* 22. 2. to relate not to *Abaziah's* Age, but to the standing of his Great Grand-fathers Race by the Mother's side, from *Omri's* Entrance into the Government, until that time. But that would be a Far-fetch, if the Text would bear it.

Nor are there wanting some who conceive (but with what ground, I know not) that *Abaziah's* Father, *Jehoram*, did not die at the end of his Eight Years Reign; but was for his Wickedness deposed, and lived a private and unregarded Life, for Twenty Years of his Son *Abaziah's* Reign; and then died, a Year before his Son. by which Contrivance they would persuade, that the Two and Twenty Years of *Abaziah's* Age, mentioned in the Book of the *Kings*, related to his entering into the Government, upon his Father's being deposed; and that the Two and Forty Years of his Age, mentioned in the Book of *Chronicles*, referred to his more absolute Government, upon his Father's Death; and that his One Year's Reign, mentioned alike in each Place, commenced not from his first entrance to the Government, but from his Father's Death. But all this bespeaks rather a willing mind, to keep the Two Texts from clashing; than carries in it any fair Evidence, to clear the Truth of the Matter.

But how long or short soever his Reign was, or at what Age soever he came to it, this King *Abaziah* walked in the ways of the House of *Ahab*; for his Mother, whose Name was *Athaliah*, was his Counsellor

to do wickedly. She is said to be the Daughter of Omri, 2 Chron. 22. 2. which hath made some call her *Abab's Sister*: But she was indeed the Daughter of Abab, 2 Chron. 21. 6. and so the *Grand-daughter of Omri*.

Having so ill a Counsellor, it is not to be wondred that he took *Evil Courses*, and did Evil in the Sight of the Lord; like the House of Abab. For as his Father, while he lived, was not likely to direct him better, either by *Advice* or *Example*: So after his Death, his Mother, and others of that Family, by their *pernicious Counsels*, led him to Destruction. For by their *Advice* it was, that he went with *Jehoram*, (Son of Abab, and King of Israel) to War against *Hazael* King of Syria, at *Ramoth-Gilead*. Where *Jehoram* (or *Joram*, for so also, by *Contraction*, he is called) being beaten and Wounded, he returned to *Jezreel*, to be healed of his Wounds: And thither also went *Abaziah* to visit him, and bear him Company while he lay sick of his Wounds.

Mean while the Prophet *Elisha* (that he might perform what his Master the Prophet *Elijah*, was commanded to do, 1 Kings 19. 16.) calling to him one of the Sons of the Prophets, said unto him, *Gird up thy Loins* (that is as Interpreters generally understand it, from the Custom in those Eastern Countries, of wearing Garments long and loose, Gird up thy long Coat, or Gown, about thy Loins, that it may not, by hanging at thy Heels, hinder thy speedy running) *and take this Box of Oil in thy Hand to Ramoth-Gilead*. And when thou art come thither, *look out there Jehu the Son of Jehoshaphat, the Son of Nimshi; and go in, and make him arise up from among his Brethren* (or Companions) *and lead him to an inner Chamber*. Then take the Box of Oil, and pour it on his Head, and say, *Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee King over Israel*. Then open the Door, and flee; and tarry not.

With this *Instruction* the young Prophet hastened to *Ramoth-Gilead*. Where finding the *Captains* of the Host sitting together, he stept in amongst them, and said, *I have an Errand to thee, O Captain*. But not distinguishing him by Name, *Jehu* asked, *Unto which of us all?* To whom the Prophet replied, *To Thee, O Captain*. *Jehu* thereupon arising, went with him into a *private Room* in the House, where the Prophet having poured the Oil on his Head, thus delivered his Message to him.

‘ Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I have; anointed thee King over the People of the Lord, even over Israel. And thou shalt smite the House of Abab thy Master; that I may *avenge the Blood of my Servants the Prophets, and the Blood of all the Servants of the Lord*, at the Hand of Jezebel. For the whole House of Abab shall perish; and I will cut off from Abab him that pisseth against the Wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel. And I will make the House of Abab like the House of *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*, and like the House of *Baasha*, the Son of *Abijah*. And the Dogs shall eat Jezebel in the Portion of *Jezreel*; and there shall be none to bury her. And having thus said, the Prophet opened the Door, and fled.

In this Passage we may observe, that altho’ *Elisha* sending a young Man on this so important an Errand, took care to give him particular Instruction and Direction, how to behave himself in every part of the Action, relating not only to the *Anointing of Jehu*; but to his own Safety in escaping afterwards: Yet the Particulars of the Message, with the Respect to the End for which *Jehu* was anointed, and the Work to which he was appointed, namely, the utter Destruction of *Abab's House* (contained in ver. 7, 8, 9, 10. of 2 Kings 9.) it doth not from the Text appear that *Elisha* did *dictate* to him. But rather it may be supposed, that the Messenger, (being a Prophet, tho’ but young) received the Particulars of his Message immediately from the Lord.

When

When the Prophet was gone, and *Jehu* come forth to his Companions again, they asked him, First, more generally, *If all was well?* ^{2 Kin. 9.} Then more particularly, *Wherefore that Phanatick, or mad Fellow* (so ^{2 Chr. 22.} were the good Prophets, even then, by some contemptuously called) *came to him?*

He would have put them off with a *general* Answer, telling them *They knew the Man and his Communication* (as much as to say, Ye see he is one of the Prophets, and therefore ye may well guess at his Business.) But they, not satisfied with such a *general* Answer, pressed him to tell them his Message more *particularly*. Whereupon he told them, Thus and thus he spake to me, saying, Thus saith the Lord, *I have anointed thee King over Israel.*

As soon as they heard that, not staying to hear more, they took their Garments, and putting them under him on the Top of the Stairs, they, with Sound of Trumpet, *proclaimed him King*. He thereupon, *wisely taking the Captains into Counsel*, said to them, *If it be your Mind, Let none of you go forth, nor escape out of the City* (*Ramoth-Gilead*, where all this was transacted) to carry Tidings of it to *Jezreel*, where the King lay sick of his Wounds.

Care being taken of that, *Jehu* forthwith set forward for *Jezreel*; that he might *surprize and seize* the King there. But ere he could get thither, the *Sentinel*, or Watchman, that stood on the Tower of *Jezreel*, espying the Company of *Jehu* on the way, gave warning thereof. Whereupon King *Joram* ordered a *Scout* or Horseman, to be sent forth to meet them, to enquire *if they came peaceably*.

As soon as the Messenger met *Jehu*, he asked him in the King's Name, if he came in a friendly and peaceable Manner? To whom *Jehu* answering short, said, *What hast thou to do with Peace? Turn thee behind me.*

The Watchman on the Tower presently gave notice, that the Messenger was gone to them; but did not come back again. Whereupon the King sent forth a *Second Horseman*; who being come, and in the King's Name asking the same Question, *Is it Peace?* Received from *Jehu* the same Answer, *What hast thou to do with Peace? Turn thee behind me.*

When the Watchman had given account of *this also*, and had told them that the marching was *like the marching of Jehu*, the Son (that is the Grandson) of *Nimshi*; for that he marched *furiously*: King *Joram* called for his Chariot; and taking with him his Guest, *Abaziah* King of *Judah* (but each in his own Chariot) they went out against *Jehu*, whom they met (Providence so ordering it) in *the very spot of Ground*, which *Abah* had taken from *Naboth the Jezreelite*. And as soon as *Joram* came near to *Jehu*, he also asked the same Question, *Is it Peace, Jehu?* And received from him this *rough* Answer, *What Peace! So long as the Whoredoms of thy Mother Jezebel, and her Witchcrafts are so many?*

By that Answer *Joram* knew what he was to expect. Wherefore thinking it better to trust to his *Heels* than to his *Hands*, he cried out, *There is Treachery, O Abaziah*: And turning away fled. But *Jehu* drawing a Bow with his full Strength, smote King *Joram* between his Arms, so that the Arrow went out at his *Heart*; and he sank down in his Chariot. Which *Jehu* observing, bid *Bidkar* his Captain, take him up, and cast him into the *Portion of the Field of Naboth*. For remember, said he, how that when thou and I rode together after *Abah* his Father, the Lord laid this Burden upon him, saying, *Surely, I have seen yesterday the Blood of Naboth, and the Blood of his Sons, and I will requite thee in this Plat, saith the Lord*. Now therefore take, and cast him into the Plat of Ground, according to the Word of the Lord.

When

When *Abaziah*, the King of *Judah*, saw this, he fled by the way of
 2 Kin. 9. the Garden-house; and *Jehu* following after him, bid, *Smite him also*
in his Chariot: Which they did; whereupon he, finding himself
mortally wounded, fled to *Megiddo*, and there died. From thence his
 Servants carried him in a Chariot to *Jerusalem*; and there buried him
 in his Sepulchre, among his Fathers, in the City of *David*. But his
Destruction is expressly said to be of God, 2 Chron. 22. 7. by his going
 to *Foram*; and indeed his going to *Foram* hastened it, and brought it
 more immediately on him: Not but that it was *due to him*, not only
 as he was a *Branch of Ahab's Family*, (being the Son of *Ahab's Daughter*)
 to all which *utter Destruction* was denounced; but as he walked, the little
 time he reigned, in the way of his Grandfather *Ahab*.

But *Jehu*, pursuing his Course, went on to *Jezreel*. Whither when
 the Queen Dowager *Jezebel* (*Ahab's Widow*) heard he was come, she
 resolving to hold up her *Grandeur* to the last, *painted her Face*, and
tricked up her Head; and as he entred in at the Gate, she looking out
 at a Window, *upbraidingly* asked him, *Had Zimri peace, who slew his*
Master?

Jehu thereupon, looking up to the Window, asked, *Who is on my*
 A. M. Side, *Who?* And there looking out to him Two or Three *Eunuchs*, He
 3120. bid them *throw her down*; and they did so: And in the *Fall*, some of
 her Blood was sprinkled on the Wall, and on the Horses; and *Jehu* trod
 her under Foot.

This Execution done, *Jehu* went in, and did eat and drink. But be-
 thinking himself of *Jezebel*, he said to some about him, Go see now af-
 ter this *curst Woman*, and bury her: For she is a *King's Daughter*;
 and so indeed she was, the Daughter of *Eth-baal* King of the *Zido-*
nians, 1 Kings 16. 31. But when they came to bury her, they found no
 more of her, but the Skull and the Feet, and the Palms of her Hands:
 For the Dogs had eaten the rest. Which when they had reported to
Jehu, he made this Observation on it; This (said he) is the (Effect of)
 the Word of the Lord, which he spake by his Servant *Elijah the Tish-*
bite, when he said, *In the Portion of Jezreel shall Dogs eat the Flesh of*
Jezebel: And the Carcasses of *Jezebel* shall be as Dung upon the Face
 of the Field, in the Portion of *Jezreel*; so that they shall not say, *This*
is Jezebel. There shall not be so much of her left, as whereby she may
 be known.

Thus died this wretched Queen; Notorious for her Wickedness:
 Notorious also for the eminent Judgment, which brought her to this
 wretched end. Whose Memory has been hateful in all Ages since: And
 whose Name, near a Thousand Years after her Death was used *anig-*
matically to represent the greatest Seducer, and Idolatress, in the early
 time of the Christian Church, Rev. 2. 20.

King *Ahab* had Seventy Sons in *Samaria* (under which Term, Nephews,
 or Grandsons, are sometimes comprehended, in Scripture-Phrase) Here
 were Heirs enough to the Crown of *Israel*: And likely enough, one
 would think, it might have been that, out of so many, some one
 or other might have tried his Title with *Jehu*; *Jehu*, willing to sound
 the Minds of the Princes and Rulers of *Samaria*, who had the Care and
 Oversight of *Ahab's Children*, sent them a braving Letter, in these
 Terms.

' As soon as this Letter cometh to you, seeing your Master's Sons
 ' are with you, and there are with you Chariots and Horses, a fenced City
 ' also, and Armour: Look out even the best and fittest of your Master's
 ' Sons, and set him on his Father's Throne; and fight for your Master's
 ' House.

When

When they had read this Letter, they were exceedingly afraid; and said one to another, *Behold, Two Kings stood not before him: How then shall we stand?* He therefore that was over the King's House, and he that was over the City, together with the Elders, and those that had the Education of Ahab's Children, sent to Jehu saying, *We are thy Servants; and we will do all that thou shalt bid us: We will not make any King; do thou that which is good in thine Eyes.*

Upon this *submissive Message*, Jehu sent them another Letter; in which he writ, *If ye be mine; and will hearken unto my Voice: Then take ye the Heads of the Men, your Master's Sons, and come to me to Jezreel, by to morrow this time.*

When they had received this *Second Letter*, they made no more ado; but took the King's Sons, being Seventy Persons, and slew them: And putting their *Heads in Baskets*, sent them to Jehu, at Jezreel.

When the Messengers told Jehu that they had brought the *Heads* of the King's Sons; he gave order they should be laid in *Two Heaps*, at the entering in of the Gate, until the Morning. And in the Morning, going forth to them, he said to all the People; *Ye be Righteous. Behold, I conspired against my Master, and slew him: But who slew all these? Know now, that there shall not fall unto the Earth any thing of the Word of the Lord, which the Lord spake concerning the House of Ahab: For the Lord hath done that which he spake by his Servant Elijah.*

Having now slain all that remained of the House of Ahab in Jezreel; and all his great Men, and his Kinsfolks, and his Priests, until he had left him none remaining there: Jehu departed thence, and took his way towards Samaria, to see what of Ahab's Stock was yet left there. And as he was at the *Shearing-house* in the way, he met with the Brethren (or rather *Brother's Sons*, 2 Chron. 22. 8.) of Abaziah late King of Judah; who seemed not to have known any thing of this *sudden Revolution*: For when he asked them, *Who they were?* They answered, *We are the Brethren, (or near Kinsmen) of Abaziah; and we go down to salute the Children of the King and of the Queen.* Whereupon he bid his Guards, *Take them alive;* which they did: And then slew them at the Pit of the Shearing-House, even *Two and Forty Men*; not sparing one of them.

He was gone but a little further on his way, ere he lighted on Jehonadab, the Son of Rachab, coming to meet him. And having saluted him, he asked, *Is thy Heart right, as my Heart is with thy Heart?* To which Jehonadab answering, *It is: If it be so, said Jehu, Give me thy Hand.* Jehonadab thereupon giving him his Hand, Jehu took him up to him into the Chariot, saying, *Come with me, and see my Zeal for the Lord.* And being come to Samaria, he slew all that remained to Ahab there; till he had destroyed him in his whole Race.

But Jehu had a main part of his Work yet to do; which was to destroy the Priests of Baal: For the Accomplishment of which, he thought it necessary to join Policy with his Strength. Wherefore having gathered all the People together, he told them, *Ahab had served Baal a little: But Jehu would serve him much. Now therefore, said he, call unto me all the Prophets of Baal, all his Servants, and all his Priests; let none be wanting: For I have a great Sacrifice to offer to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live.* But Jehu did this in Subtily, to the intent that he might destroy all the Worshippers of Baal.

Then causing a solemn Assembly for Baal to be proclaimed, he sent through all Israel (to give notice thereof;) and all the Worshippers of Baal came, in such Numbers, that they filled the House of Baal, from one end to the other.

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Then

^{2 Kin. 11.}
^{2 Chr. 23.} Then ordered *Jehu*, that *Vestments* should be brought forth for all the *Worshippers* of *Baal*. Which being done, he, and *Jehonadab* went in among them; and bid the *Worshippers* of *Baal* search, and see that none of the *Servants* of the *Lord* were there with them: But the *Worshippers* of *Baal* only. And when they went in to offer *Sacrifices* and *Burnt-offerings*, *Jehu* appointed *Fourscore* Men to watch without; unto whom he said, *If any of the Men, whom I have brought into your Hands, escape, he that letteth him go, shall die for him.*

This done, and the *Burnt-offering* ended, *Jehu* said, to the *Guard* and to the *Captains*; *Go in, and slay them: Let none come forth.* They thereupon going in among them, smote them all with the edge of the *Swords*: And having cast them out, they went to the *City* of the *House* of *Baal*, and brought forth the *Images* out of the *House* of *Baal*; and burnt them. And having broken down the *Image* of *Baal*, they brake down also the *House* of *Baal*; and made it a *Draught-House* from thence forward. Thus *Jehu* destroyed *Baal* out of *Israel*.

Yet for all this, from the *Sins* of *Jeroboam* the *Son* of *Nebat*, who made *Israel* to sin, (*viz.* from following after the *Golden Calves*, that were in *Bethel* and in *Dan*) *Jehu* departed not. For that being not so much a *Religious*, as *Politick* Piece of *Idolatry*; contrived, at the first *Division* of the *Kingdom*, to keep the *Israelites* from going up to *Jerusalem* to worship, lest they should in time take the *Crown* along with them, and reunite themselves to *Judah*: The same *Interest*, and *Reason of State*, that set up those *Calves*, prevailed still to keep them up.

So acceptable, however, to *God* was *Jehu's* Zeal, and hearty Diligence, in executing his *Judgments* upon *Ahab's* House, that he thereupon entailed the *Crown* of *Israel* upon his Family unto the *Fourth Generation*. Telling him, *Because thou hast done well* in executing that which is right in mine *Eyes*, and hast done unto the *House* of *Ahab*, according to all that was in my *Heart*; thy *Children* of the *Fourth Generation* shall sit on the *Throne* of *Israel*.

Yet because *Jehu*, for all this great *Favour* promised him, did not take heed to walk in the way of the *Lord* *God* of *Israel* with all his *Heart*, nor departed from the *Sins* of *Jeroboam*; the *Lord* began, even in his time, to cut *Israel* short: Suffering *Hazael*, *King* of *Syria*, to smite them in all their *Coasts*.

For the rest of the *Acts* of *Jehu*, all that he did, and all his *Might*, we are referr'd to the *Book* of the *Chronicles* of the *Kings* of *Israel*. Which cannot be either of those *Two Books*, which are now extant under that *Name*: For very little mention is made of him at all in either of those *Books*; nothing in comparison of what is said of him in these 9th and 10th *Chapters* of the *Second Book* of *Kings*. Whence we may well conclude, that that *Book* of *Chronicles*, to which we are here, and often elsewhere referr'd, is lost.

That which remains of the *Story* of *Jehu* is, that having reigned over *Israel* in *Samaria* *Eight* and *Twenty Years*, he slept with his *Fathers*, and was buried in *Samaria*; and *Jeboabaz* his *Son* reigned in his stead.

It was now a very bloody time. For as *Jehu* had shed much *Blood* in *Israel*; so *Athaliah* (the *Queen Dowager* of *Judah*, and *Mother* to the late *King Abaziah*, a right *Daughter* of *Jezebel*) when she saw her *Son Abaziah* was slain, usurping to her self the *Government* of *Judah*, did, in revenge of her *Father Ahab's* Family, destroy all the *Seed* *Royal*, that she might utterly root out the *Stock* of good *King Jeho-shaphat*, and secure to her self, and her other *Sons*, the *Kingdom*. For *Broughton* says she had *Sons* by another: And that she had, may be gathered from *2 Chron. 24. 7.* But

But tho' she made *great Havock* in the *Royal Family*; yet *Divine Providence* hindred her from totally extirpating *Jehoshaphat's Race*. For ^{2 Kin. 11.} *Jehoshaba*, the Daughter of King *Joram*, and Sister to the late King *Ahaziah*, ^{2 Chr. 23.} took little *Jehoash* (called also, by Contraction, *Joash*, 2 Chron. 22. 11.) an *Infant* of a Year old, whom she had *stolen* from among the King's Sons that were slain, and *hid him*, with his Nurse, in a Bed-chamber, in the House of the Lord: Which she had the better means of doing, being her self the Wife of *Jehoiada* the High-Priest.

Six Years together was this young Prince concealed, and brought up by his *Aunt*, unknown to *Athaliah*; who, during all that time, reigned over *Judah*.

But in the *Seventh Year*, his Uncle *Jehoiada* the Priest, resolving now to bring him forth, and set him up for King; first strengthened himself, by taking the Captains and Rulers into Counsel, and Covenant with him, to maintain and defend both the Person and Title of the young King. Which Covenant he made them confirm by Oath, in the House of the Lord: And then shewed them the King's Son, little *Jehoash*.

Then directing the manner, how this *great Enterprize* should be accomplished; he gave order that the *Levites*, and chief of the Fathers, should be gathered out of all the Cities of *Judah*, to *Jerusalem*. Where being assembled, and having taken the Covenant for setting up the young Prince for King, and maintaining his Title: *Jehoiada* the Priest appointed them their several Posts. Ordering a Third part of the *Priests* and ministering *Levites* (whose turn it was to wait in the Temple from Sabbath to Sabbath) to guard the Doors; a Third part to guard the King's House (that is, his *Apartment* in the House of the Lord) and to attend his Person: And a Third part to keep one of the principal Gates: Leaving the People in the Courts of the House of the Lord, with this Charge, that if any one should attempt to break in within the Ranges, he should be put to Death.

Things thus disposed, and the *Priests* and *Levites* having *Weapons* delivered to them, out of King *David's* Armory, which was kept in the House of the Lord; *Jehoiada* brought forth the King's Son, and set the Crown upon him: And gave him the *Testimony* (the Book of the Law, according to the Law, *Deut.* 17. 18.) And having anointed him King, they clapt their Hands, and shouted for Joy; and with sound of Trumpet proclaiming him, said, *God save the King*.

The Noise that was made by the *Acclamations* of the People, as they ran to and fro rejoicing, startled *Queen Athaliah*; who, little thinking that the end of her *Reign*, and of her *Life* also, was so near, hastened to the House of the Lord, to see what the matter was. But when she came in, and saw the young King, standing at his *Pillar*, at the entering in, with the *Princes* by him, the *Guards* about him, and the *People* of the Land rejoicing, with Instruments of Musick, and Trumpets sounding; she rent her Clothes, and cried out, *Treason, Treason*: Her self the *Traytor*. But *Jehoiada* the Priest commanded the Captains, and Officers of the Host, to have her forth without the Ranges (that she might not be slain in the House of the Lord) and to kill any that should attempt to take her part. Whereupon they laid Hands on her, and having brought her out by the Horse-gate, slew her there with the Sword.

Then did *Jehoiada* make a Covenant between the Lord and the King, with the People; whereby they bound themselves to be the Lord's People. Which done, the People went out to the House of *Baal*, and brake it down. His *Altars* also, and his *Images*, they brake in pieces: and

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and slew *Mattan* the Priest of *Baal*, before the *Altar* (according to the Law, *Deut.* 12. 9.)

After which, *Jehoiada* the Priest (having purged out some Corruptions, which in the former Reigns, had been brought into the Church) took the Captains of the Host, with the Nobles and Governors, and all the People of the Land, and having brought down the King from the House of the Lord, through the High-gate, into the King's House, set him on the Throne of the Kingdom. At which all the People rejoiced; and the City was quiet, after they had slain *Athaliah*.

^{2 Kin. 12.}
^{2 Chr. 24.}

Seven Years old was *Joash*, when he began to reign; which was in the Seventh Year of *Jehu* King of *Israel*: And he reigned Forty Years in *Jerusalem*. And for so long of that time, as *Jehoiada* the High-Priest lived, who instructed him in the way of God, he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. Whence we may observe, what great helps good Counsel and good Example are to a Prince. Yet the High-places were not taken away: But the People still sacrificed, and burnt Incense in the High-places. Which so long as they did it to the Lord, not to *Baal*, or other Idols, was winked at: tho' expressly contrary to God's Command, *Numb.* 33. 52. and commonly destructive to themselves.

Tho' in the King's minority, *Jehoiada* had some what reformed the Ecclesiastical State, and the Officers therein: Yet he had not done any thing towards Repairing the House of God; which, thro' the Corruption of former times, had been not only suffered to go to decay, but had also been spoiled by that wicked Woman, *Athaliah*, and her Children, *2 Chron.* 24. 7.

When therefore *Jehoash* (or *Joash*) was grown up to Man's Estate, he set his Mind to repair the House of the Lord. And having gathered the Priests and the Levites together, he gave them in Charge, to go out unto the Cities of *Judah*, and gather Money of all the People, to repair the House of the Lord, from Year to Year.

To this Service was appropriated all the Money of the dedicated things, that was brought into the House of the Lord, the Ransom, or Redemption-money (half a Shekel upon every Head that was Taxable, *Exod.* 30. 12.) and all the Money that came in by Free-will-offerings. This the King ordered the Priests to take, every one of his Acquaintance, and with this to repair the Breaches of the House, wheresoever any Breach should be found.

But tho' he expressly charged them to hasten the work: Yet the Levites hastened it not. So that in the Three and Twentieth Year of King *Joash*, they had not repaired the Breaches of the House.

The King therefore calling for *Jehoiada*, and the other Priests, and blaming them for their negligence therein, forbade them to receive any more Money of their Acquaintance on that Account: And required them to deliver up what they had received for that Service.

Upon this Reproof, the Priests (taking the Money of the Trespass-offerings, and of the Sin-offerings, to their own use) consented to receive no more Money from the People, on the other Accounts, nor take upon them the Charges of Repairing the Breaches of the House. But *Jehoiada* the Priest, at the King's Commandment, took a Chest, and having bored an Hole in the Lid of it, big enough for Money to be put in at, set it beside the *Altar*, on the right Hand, as they went into the House of the Lord. And Proclamation being made through *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, for all to bring in to the Lord the Collection, which *Moses*, the Servant of the Lord, had laid upon *Israel* in the Wilderness; all the Princes and People rejoicing thereat, brought in, and cast into the Chest, until they had made an end. And as oft as they found there was much Money

Money in the Chest, the King's Secretary, and the High-Priest (or his Officer) took it out, and told it; and putting it up in Bags, deliver'd ^{2 Kin. 12.} ^{2 Chr. 24.} it to the *Surveyors* of the Work: Who paid it away to the Carpenters, Builders, Masons and Stone-cutters, as well for their Workmanship, as for the Timber, Stone, and other Materials, which were used for Repairing the House of the Lord.

This so encouraged the Workmen, that they *plied the Work*, and finish'd it. And when they had put the House of God in good Repair, they brought the rest of the Money that was left, before the King and *Jehoiada* (for tho' they reckoned not with the Men, who were entrusted for the Money for the Workmen; yet they *dealt faithfully* in it:) And out of that Remainder of the Money, were made Vessels of Silver and of Gold, to minister, and to offer withal, in the House of the Lord. For very likely it is, that in the former wicked Reigns, as the House of the Lord had been defaced: So the Vessels of that House had been *imbezelled* and lost, or transferred to the House of *Baal*; and having been thereby *polluted*, were not fit for the Service of God any more.

The High-Priest *Jehoiada* had now attained to a *good old Age*; being an Hundred and Thirty Years old when he died. And because he had *done good* in *Israel*, both towards God, and towards his House; in *restoring the true Worship of God* (which both King and People kept to all his Days) and in settling the Kingdom again in the House of *David*: Therefore they buried him in the City of *David*, and amongst the Kings.

But when once this good Man's Head was laid, the Princes of *Judah*, who had lived in the former Idolatrous Reigns, came and made *Obedience* to the King; and by their *Flattery* prevailing on him, drew him, with themselves, to forsake the House of the Lord God of their Fathers (upon which they had so lately bestowed so much Charge) and to serve *Groves* and *Idols*: For which great *Trespasses* of theirs, *Wrath* came upon *Judah* and *Jerusalem* from the Lord. Yet he sent *Prophets* to them (such as he raised up, and employed on particular Occasions,) to bring them again unto the Lord: But they would not give Ear.

Then came the Spirit of the Lord upon *Zachariah* (the Son of *Jehoiada* the late High-Priest) who taking up his standing above the People, said thus unto them, *Thus saith the Lord, Why transgress ye the Commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? Because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you.*

This so nettled those *Backsliders*, that they conspired against him; and stoned him to Death, even in the Court of the House of the Lord, which they stuck not thus to *pollute with innocent Blood*: And (which was yet worse) they did it at the Command of the King; who too *ungratefully* forgetting the manifold Kindnesses which his Father *Jehoiada* had done for him, both in saving his *Life*, and setting him on the *Throne*, unjustly and barbarously slew his Son. He, being at the point of Death, said, *The Lord look upon it, and require it.*

Nor was it long, before the Lord did require the innocent Blood of this his Servant, upon both King and People. For at the end of the Year, *Hazael* King of *Syria*, coming up with his Host, fought against *Gath* (a Principal City, which King *David* had taken from the *Philistines*, 1 Chron. 18. 1.) and took it. And from thence marching up to *Jerusalem*, he destroyed all the Princes of *Jerusalem*: Which struck such a Terror into King *Joash*, that he took all the hallowed things, which *Jehoshaphat*, and *Jehoram*, and *Abaziah* his Fathers, Kings of *Judah*, had in Three Generations before dedicated, with the Things which he had

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dedicated also; and all the Gold that was found in the Treasures of the House of the Lord, and in the King's House; and delivered it to Hazael King of Syria, that he might depart from Jerusalem.

Remarkably eminent was the Judgment of God upon these Princes of Judah; that they, who had been the immediate Instruments to draw King Joash from the Service and Worship of the true God, (in which he had been Religiously educated) to Idolatry, and the Worship of Idols, should themselves be destroyed so soon after, by an Idolater, and Worshipper of Idols. And that it might the more evidently appear to be a Divine Judgment from God, upon both King and People of Judah, for their having forsaken the Lord God of their Fathers, he at this time delivered a very great Host of Judah, into the Hands of a small Company of Men of the Syrian Army.

Neither yet did the Judgment stop there, with respect to King Joash himself: But (Blood requiring Blood) when the Syrians were departed from him (who left him labouring under great Diseases) his own Servants (Zabad, the Son of an Ammonitess, and Jebozabad, the Son of a Moabitess, conspiring against him for the Blood of the Son of Jehoiada the Priest, flew him on his Bed, and he died, after he had Reigned Forty Years. And because he was a King, they buried him in the City of David: But not in the Sepulchres of the Kings, because he had forsaken the way of the Lord.

In the Three and Twentieth Year of this Jehoash King of Judah, Jehu dying, his Son Jehoahaz possessed the Throne of Israel. But he did that which was Evil in the Sight of the Lord; following the Sins of Jeroboam the Son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin; in the golden Calves. For which the Anger of the Lord being kindled against Israel, he delivered them into the Hand of Hazael King of Syria, and afterwards into the Hand of Ben-hadad the Son of Hazael, all his Days. Yet when Jehoahaz besought the Lord, the Lord (seeing the Oppression, wherewith the King of Syria oppressed Israel) hearkened unto him, and in due time gave Israel a Saviour: So that they shook off the Syrian Yoke, and dwelt securely in their Tents, as they had done in times past.

But this Deliverance was not wrought by Jehoahaz, nor in his time (at least, not in the time of his sole Reign;) but by his Son Joash, or Jehoash, either after his Death, or as Co-Rex, with his Father (for such Synarchies, or joynt Reigns of Father and Son together, were very frequent in those times:) and render the Chronology much more difficult. But Hazael King of Syria, oppressed Israel all the Days of Jehoahaz; and reduced him to so low a Condition, that he left him but Fifty Horsemen, and Ten Chariots, and Ten Thousand Footmen: Having destroyed the rest by his frequent Victories over them.

The Prophet Elisha, tho' very old, was yet living: And might now to his Satisfaction in one Sense, tho' Sorrow in another, see the fulfilling of that Prediction, which he had given Hazael, concerning the Ravage and Cruelty, which he would exercise upon Israel, when he should come to wear the Syrian Crown. Which if the Sense thereof so affected him, when, in the Spirit of Prophecy, he only foresaw it, as then to draw a Shower of Tears from his Eyes: What may we suppose it now did, when he saw it actually performed.

But he had the Comfort also to foresee, and fore-tell the End of it. For when Joash, the Son of this debased Jehoahaz, came to the Crown, he going to visit the good old Prophet Elisha (who was then fallen sick of the Sickness whereof he died) wept over his Face, bewailing the approaching Loss of so great a Prophet, and so Holy a Man; who by his fore-

forewarnings of Dangers, his wholsom Counsels, and prevalent Prayers, was as a Guard and Bulwark to the Nation) cried out, *O my Father, my Father! The Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof!* alluding, ^{2 Kin. 13.} perhaps, to the like Expression, used long before by this good Prophet, at the Departure of his endeared Master *Elijah*.

The Prophet, thereupon, as it were reviving, and knowing that the Lord had determined, by this King *Joash*, to deliver *Israel* from the Oppression of *Syria*, bid him take a *Bow* and *Arrows*: Which when the King had taken, and at the Prophet's Direction, had laid his Hand upon the Bow, ready to draw it: The Prophet putting his Hands upon the King's Hands (that they might draw the Bow together) bid him *open the Window Eastward* (towards *Syria*) and *shoot*. Which when the King had done, the Prophet said, *The Arrow of the Lord's Deliverance, and the Arrow of Deliverance from Syria: For thou* (said the Prophet to the King) *shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek* (which signifies Strength) *until thou hast consumed them*.

Then the Prophet bidding the King take the rest of the *Arrows* (out of the *Quiver*) and *smite the Ground* with them; he did so: But smote but *Thrice*, and staid. At which the Prophet was wroth with him, and told him, he should have smitten *Five or Six times*; and then he would have *smitten the Syrians*, till he had *consumed* them: Whereas now he should smite them but *Thrice*.

Yet with that *Thrice* smiting (the Lord being *gracious* to *Israel*, and having *Compassion* of them, and respect to them, because of his *Covenant* with *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, for the sake of which he would not destroy them, nor cast them from his Presence as yet) King *Jeboash*, after *Hazael's* Death, beating *Ben-hadad*, the Son of *Hazael*, in three several Battles, recovered from the *Syrians* the Cities of *Israel*, which had been taken from them by *Hazael*.

While this was doing, *Elisha* the Prophet died, and was buried, and in a while after, another Man being to be buried, near to the *Sepulchre* of *Elisha*, it happened that they who attended that *Burial*, spied a Band of Soldiers coming on towards them (for the *Moabites* had at that time invaded the Land :) and being more *intent* upon their own *Safety*, than the *Solemnity* of the *Funeral*, they, for *haste* cast the Man into the *Sepulchre* of *Elisha*. But no sooner was the dead Man *let down*, that he *touched the Bones* of *Elisha*, but he *revived* and *stood upon his Feet*. Which *Miracle*, wrought *after the Prophet's Death*, did stamp a *Divine Approbation* on the *Prophetick Actions* of his Life.

Soon after *Jeboash*, the Son of *Jeboahaz*, came to the Crown of *Israel*. ^{2 Kin. 14.} *Amaziah* succeeded his Father *Joash* in the Kingdom of *Judah*. And he, for a while, *did that which was right* in the Sight of the Lord; tho' not with a perfect Heart, nor like his Ancestor, King *David*: For, as if he had taken his Father *Joash* for his Pattern, he let the High-places remain standing, and suffered the People to offer Sacrifice, and burn Incense thereon.

The First publick Act we read he did, after he was settled on the Throne, was to slay those Servants of his, that had slain his Father. But the Children of the Murderers he did not slay: Having therein regard to the Law of *Moses*, *Deut. 24. 16.* wherein the Lord commanded, That the Fathers should not be put to Death for the Children; nor the Children for the Fathers: But every Man for his own Offence.

That piece of Justice performed, he gathered the Men of *Judah* together; and having made Captains over Thousands, and over Hundreds, according to the Houses of their Fathers, throughout all *Judah* and *Benjamin*, he numbred them from Twenty Years old and upwards; and

and found them Three Hundred Thousand choice Men, able to go forth to War, and to handle Spear and Shield.

^{2 Kin. 14.} To these he added an Hundred Thousand mighty Men of Valour, whom he had hired out of Israel, for an Hundred Talents of Silver. And with these intended to march against the Edomites.

But there came a Man of God to him, and said, O King, *Let not the Army of Israel go with thee: For the Lord is not with Israel; nor with the Children of Ephraim.* Then, not finding a Readiness in the King to comply with this Caution, he added, *But if (notwithstanding this fair Warning) thou wilt go on in thy own Will and Way, do; make thy self strong for the Battel: But God shall make thee fall before the Enemy; for God hath Power to help, and to cast down.*

This put the King to a stand. Yet considering the Charge he had been at, he said to the Man of God, *But if I put off the Army of Israel, what shall we do for the Hundred Talents, which I have given them?* This was a round Sum, amounting to Thirty and Seven Thousand and Five Hundred Pounds; which the King thought too much to lose. But the Man of God, flighting that, told him, *The Lord was able to give him much more than that.*

Upon this King Amaziah, drawing out his mercenary Men, that came to him out of Ephraim, sent them home again: And strengthening himself with his own Men, led them forth to the Valley of Salt. Where setting upon the Children of Seir, he smote Ten Thousand of them: And taking other Ten Thousand alive, the Men of Judah brought them to the Top of the Rock; and from thence casting them down, they were broken all to pieces.

This Victory was somewhat abated, by a Loss the Conquerors sustained the mean while. For the Israelitish Army, which Amaziah had discharged, consisting of an Hundred Thousand mighty Men of Valour, took it so ill that they were sent back, and not suffered to go with him to the Battel, that in their return home, they fell furiously upon the Cities of Judah, all the way they went from Samaria, even to Bethoron, and smiting Three Thousand of them, carried away much Spoil.

But this was not by much the worst that Amaziah suffered by this Expedition. For when he returned from the Slaughter of the Edomites, he brought along with him the Gods of the Children of Seir; and set them up to be his Gods: And bowing down himself before them, he burned Incense unto them.

For this, the Anger of the Lord was kindled against Amaziah; and he sent him a Prophet, who said unto him, *Why hast thou sought after the Gods of the People, which could not deliver their own People out of thy Hand?* This was such a Rational way of Conviction, as one would have thought, should have brought the King to a sense of his Sin by his Folly: But it had not so good an effect upon him. For when the Prophet went on with his Message to him, the King grew pettish, and said angrily to him, *Art thou made of the King's Counsel? Forbear, Why shouldst thou be smitten?* (that is, why shouldst thou provoke me to smite thee?) The Prophet then, finding him hardened beyond Counsel, forbore pressing it further on him; and only said, *I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this; and hast not hearkened to his Counsel by me.*

It was not long ere this threatened Destruction came upon Amaziah, and that by his own Means. For being somewhat puffed up with his late Victory over the Edomites; and holding himself engaged in Honour, to revenge the Injury lately done him by the Israelitish Army, in sacking his Cities: He sent a Message to Joash King of Israel, in these Words;

Words; *Come, let us look one another in the Face.* Which Terms, in those Times, imported a Challenge to fight: And was here intended, ^{2 Kin. 14.} not for a *Duel*, or single Combat; but for a *pitch Battel*. ^{2 Chr. 25.}

King *Joash*, to shew his Contempt of *Amaziah*, returned him Answer in this *nipping Apologue*.

'The *Thistle* that was in *Lebanon*, sent to the *Cedar* that was in *Lebanon*, saying, 'Give thy Daughter to my Son to Wife. But there passed by a *Wild Beast*, that was in *Lebanon*: And trod down the *Thistle*. Then he added, 'Thou sayest (in thy Heart at least) Lo, 'I have smitten the *Edomites*! and thy Heart listeth thee up to boast. 'Well! abide at home (and boast there if thou wilt:) For why shouldst thou meddle to thy Hurt; that thou shouldst fall, and *Judah* with thee?

This scornful Answer whetted *Amaziah* the more; seeing himself compared to the *Thistle*, while *Joash* likened himself to the *Cedar*. So that he would not hearken to any Terms of Peace: But drew forth his Forces to the Field. And indeed, God so disposed him, that he might deliver him and his People into the Hand of their Enemies; because they had fought after the Gods of *Edom*.

King *Joash* having also led forth his Men, the Battel was joined at *Beth-sheMesh* (a City belonging to *Judah*) which signifies, *The House of Bondage*; and so indeed it proved to *Amaziah*: For *Israel* prevailing, *Judah* was put to the worst; and glad to save themselves, who could, by Flight.

Amaziah himself being taken Prisoner, King *Joash* brought him along with him to *Jerusalem*; whither he carried his victorious Arms. And being come thither, he brake down the Wall of *Jerusalem*, from the Gate of *Ephraim* to the Corner Gate, Four Hundred Cubits in Length; and having taken all the Gold and Silver, and all the Vessels (of Value) that were found in the House of God, under the Charge of the Sons of *Obed-Edom*, with the Treasures of the King's House, and Hostages also, he returned to *Samaria*, leaving (as it seems) King *Amaziah* at liberty at *Jerusalem*.

But tho' *Amaziah* lived many Years after this; yet we read nothing more of him, save that his People conspiring against him in *Jerusalem*, he fled for Safety to *Lachish*. But they sending some to *Lachish* after him, slew him there: And bringing him back to *Jerusalem* (not with State in his Chariot, but) on Horses; buried him with his Fathers in the City of *David*.

Joash, King of *Israel*, was dead Fifteen Years before, and had for his Successor *Jeroboam* his Son; who reigning One and Forty Years, restored in that time the Coast of *Israel*, from the entering *Hamath* unto the Sea of the Plain. To which Undertaking he was encouraged by the Prophet *Jonah*, whom the Lord sent to him for that end. For the Lord seeing the Affliction of *Israel*, that it was very bitter, and not willing the Name of *Israel* should be blotted out from under Heaven; he saved them by the Hands of this *Jeroboam* the Son of *Joash*: Tho' otherwise he was one that did Evil in the Sight of the Lord.

To this King's time, it seems, should be referr'd that great Exploit, which (we read in 1 *Chron.* 5. 18, &c.) was performed by the *Rubenites*, *Gadites*, and Half Tribe of *Manasseh*; who mustering Four and Forty Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty valiant Men, skilful in War, and able to use Sword and Buckler, and to draw the Bow, made War upon the *Hagarites*: And being helped by the Lord, (who upon their crying to him in the Battel, and putting their trust in him, was entreated of

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them,

^{2 Kings}
^{14.} them, and delivered the *Hagarites* into their Hand) gave them a very
^{2 Chr. 25.} great Defeat; and took from them a large Booty, of Fifty Thousand
Camels, Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Sheep, Two Hundred
Thousand Asses, and One Hundred Thousand Prisoners, besides what
were slain, which were many. Thus they prospered, because the War
they had was of God: And having dispossessed those *Hagarites*, they dwelt
in their Places until the Captivity.

THE

T H E
B O O K

Of the Prophet

J O N A H.

WHEN the Prophet *Jonah* (whom *Jerom* in his Prologue to that Prophet's Book, says, the *Hebrews* affirm to have been that Son of the Widow of *Sarepta*, whom the Prophet *Elijah* raised from the Dead, *1 Kings* 17.) had performed the Service he had been sent on, to King *Jeroboam*, and the People of *Israel* (mentioned before in *2 Kings* 14. 25.) the Lord commanded him to go to *Nineveh*, to cry against it; because their Wickedness was come up before him.

Nineveh, the Metropolis then of the *Assyrian Monarchy*, was very Ancient; as having been built soon after the Flood by *Nimrod*, great Grandson to *Noah* (for so Interpreters take the Words in *Gen.* 10, 11. which has some Confirmation from *Micah* 5. 6.) tho' being afterwards enlarged by *Ninus*, it took its Name from him. It was also a very great City, about Four Hundred Furlongs in Compass (as Prophane Writers report) which with us make *Fifty Miles*: And the Text delivers it to be a City of *Three Days Journey*, Chap. 3. 3. And how Populous it was may be gathered from there being in it more than *Sixscore Thousand* Persons, that did not know the Right Hand from the Left, Chap. 4. 11. which is generally understood of *Infants*.

To this so Ancient, so Great, so Populous, and withal so Wicked a Place, *Jonah* had no mind to go, especially upon so sharp a Message, as he had to deliver. Thinking therefore to flee unto *Tarshish* from the Presence of the Lord, he went down to *Joppa* a Sea-port Town, to seek a Passage. And having found a Ship there, ready to set Sail for *Tarshish*, he paid the Fare, and went on Board.

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But his Fear had made him much forget himself, in thinking he could flee from the Presence of the Lord. Which, to his Cost, he soon found: For the Lord sent forth a great Wind, which raised a great Tempest in the Sea; so that the Ship was likely to be broken.

This made the *Mariners* afraid: And Fear made them cry every Man unto his God. Then bestirring themselves to lighten the Ship, by casting forth the Wares that were in it into the Sea; when to that end they came down into the sides of the Ship, there they found *Jonah* fast asleep.

The Ship-master then rousing him up, said, What meanest thou, O Sleeper! Arise, call upon thy God: If so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.

Having

Jonab 1. Having got him up, they all agreed to cast Lots, that they might know, for whose Cause this Evil was come upon them: And the Lot fell upon *Jonab*. Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose Cause this Evil is come upon us. What is thine Occupation? And whence comest thou? What is thy Country? And of what People art thou? He thereupon telling them, that he was an Hebrew; One that feared the Lord God of Heaven, who made the Sea and the dry Land: He let them know how he had disobeyed his God, and fled from the Presence of the Lord.

When they heard this, the Men were exceedingly afraid; and said to him, Why hast thou done this? And what shall we do unto thee, that the Sea may be calm unto us? For the Sea grew more and more Tempestuous. Take me up, said he to them, and cast me forth into the Sea; so shall the Sea be calm unto you: For I know, (added he) that for my sake this great Tempest is upon you.

This ingenuous Acknowledgment begat in those rough Saylor's a Compassion towards poor *Jonab*. And tho' they had suffered so much by his means, they were very unwilling to throw him Over-board. Wherefore they rowed hard to have brought the Ship to Land. But when they found they could not do it; for that the Sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them: They cried unto the Lord (the true God, whom *Jonab* had declared to be his God, the God who made both Sea and Land, the God whom he had offended;) and they said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this Man's sake, and lay not upon us innocent Blood, if, to save our selves from perishing we are fain to cast him away: For thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee.

Having thus made a sort of Excuse to God, and deprecated his Displeasure, for what they were necessitated, by a Principle of Self-preservation, to do to a Servant of his; they took up *Jonab*, (not without some Reluctance) and heaved him Overboard into the Sea: And the Sea thereupon ceased from her raging. But the Fear which on this Occasion had seized them, together with the Sense of their Deliverance, struck them with such a Pang of Devotion, that they offered a Sacrifice unto the Lord, and made Vows.

Tho' it pleased the Lord to punish *Jonab* for his Disobedience; yet in the midst of his Judgment remembering Mercy, he had prepared a great Fish (which our Saviour tells us was a Whale, *Matt. 12. 4c.* to receive *Jonab*. And this Whale swallowing up *Jonab*, he was in the Belly of the Fish Three Days and Three Nights, and in that Respect was an apt Type of our blessed Lord, who for the like time was in the Belly of the Earth, the Grave.

Jonab 2. While *Jonab* was in that living Prison, and moving Dungeon, he prayed unto the Lord his God out of the Fish's Belly. And what he then prayed, and how great the Exercise of his Spirit then was, he himself recounted afterwards, in these Words.

' I cried, said he, by reason of mine Affliction, unto the Lord, and he heard me: Out of the Belly of the Grave cried I, and thou heardst my Voice. For thou hadst cast me into the Deep, in the midst of the Seas; and the Floods compassed me about: All thy Billows, and thy Waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy Sight: Yet will I look again towards thy Holy Temple. The Waters compassed me about, even to the Soul: The Depth closed me round about; The Weeds were wrapt about my Head. I went down to the Bottom of the Mountains: The Earth with her Bars, was about me for ever. Yet hast thou brought up my Life from Corruption, O Lord, my God.

' When

‘ When my Soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord : And my
 ‘ Prayer came in unto thee, into thine Holy Temple. *They that observe* Jonah 3.
 ‘ *lying Vanities, forsake their own Mercy* : But I will Sacrifice unto
 ‘ thee, with the Voice of *Thanksgiving* ; I will pay that which I have
 ‘ vowed. *Salvation is of the Lord.*

Now when *Jonah* had undergone his *Three Days Punishment* in the Fish’s Belly ; the Lord commanded the Fish, and it vomited out *Jonah* upon the dry Land. And *Jonah* being thus, by a *Warrant from Heaven, discharged from his Confinement*, and set at Liberty again, the Word of the Lord came to him the Second time, saying, *Arise, Go unto Nineveh, that great City, and preach unto it the Preaching that I bid thee.*

Having *smarted* for his former Disobedience, *Jonah* stood not now to Dispute, nor sought to shift the Service ; but gat him away to *Nineveh* : And entering a Day’s Journey into the City, he proclaimed, yet *Forty Days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.*

Tho’ this be the *Substance* of the Judgment denounced ; yet it is reasonable to believe, that *Jonah* preached more than barely this. Both for *Conviction*, by laying open the Sins of the *Ninevites*, to manifest the *Justice* of the Judgment denounced : And for *Exhortation*, to bring them to *Repentance*, that they might escape it.

However, the *Event* was, That the People of *Nineveh* believed this Message to be sent from God ; and *proclaiming a Fast*, and putting on *Sackcloth* by the King’s Command, gave such Tokens of *Sorrow, Repentance* and *Humiliation* ; that God thereupon repenting of the *Evil*, which he had threatened to do unto them, did it not.

This proved a *new Trial*, and *Trouble* to *Jonah* ; who hereupon discovered *another Infirmary*. He had *positively* denounced *Destruction* to *Nineveh* ; and *fixed the time*. This *Clemency* of God in sparing them, he thought would subject him to the *Censure* of having been a *false Prophet*. He stood upon his *Reputation*, which he doubted would by this means be impaired ; and for these Reasons it *displeased Jonah exceedingly* : So that he was *very angry*, and in a kind of *expostulatory Prayer*, or *precatory Expostulation*, thus spake to the Lord.

‘ I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my Saying, while I was yet in
 ‘ my Country ? Therefore it was, that I fled before unto *Tarshish* : For
 ‘ I knew that thou art a *gracious God and Merciful*, slow to Anger, and
 ‘ of great Kindness : And repentest thee of the Evil. Now therefore,
 ‘ O Lord, take, I beseech thee my Life from me : For it is better for me
 ‘ to die than to live.

The Lord gave him a *gentle Reproof*, by asking him, *If he did well to be angry ?* Whereupon *Jonah* went out of the City, and having made him a *Booth*, on the East-side thereof, he sat under it, in the Shade, till he might see what would become of the City. For having let up a *murmuring Discontent*, he was so *unsettled* in his Mind, that he knew not what to think, whether God would spare the City or destroy it.

Mean while the Lord, resolving to give *Jonah* a *Rational Conviction* of his *Partiality* to himself, and *want of Pity* to the *Ninevites*, prepared a *Gourd*, and made it to come up over *Jonah*, that it might be a *Shadow* over his Head, to deliver him from his Grief, which the scorching Beams of the Sun caused.

What this *Gourd* was, no body that I have met with, knows. Many *Conjectures* are about it, and it has afforded Matter for *great Debate*, even in old time ; especially between the Two Fathers (so called) *Jerom* and *Augustine*. *Jerom*, in his Latine Translation of the Bible, adventured to change the Name of this *Plant* : And instead of *Cucurbita*, a
 K k k k k Gourd,

Gourd, called it *Hedera*, an *Ivy*. This his *Boldness* had like it seems, *Jonah* 4. to have cost him dear. For not only *Augustine* fell upon him for it (which provoked him to fall foul upon *Augustine* again :) But he was fetcht up to *Rome* too about it (I take the Account out of *Calvin's* Commentary on this Place) and was there accused of *Sacrilege*, as it were, for changing the Name of this Plant from a *Gourd* to *Ivy*. Whatever Name it should go by, no doubt it was a spreading leafy Plant. Whence some have taken it for a *wild Vine*; others for a *Cucumber*, or a *Pompion*; and perhaps it might be the *Palmetta*.

Whatever it was, *Jonah* was exceeding glad of it: But this Joy was short. For early next Morning God prepared a *Worm*, which gnawing the *Gourd* made it wither. And when the Sun arose, God prepared a vehement East-wind; which together with the Sun, beat so fiercely upon the Head of *Jonah*, that he fainting, not only wished (in himself) that he might die, but saying again, *It is better for me to die than to live*. And when God Expostulating again with him, asked him, If he did well to be angry: He, in a *Disturbance of Mind*, answered; *I do well to be angry even unto Death*.

Then came the *Conviction* upon *Jonah*. Thou (said the Lord to him) hast had *Pity* on the *Gourd*, for which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a Night, and perished in a Night. And should not I spare *Nineveh*, that great City; wherein are more than Sixscore Thousand Persons that cannot discern between the Right Hand and their Left: And also much Cattel.

As this Book of *Jonah* begins abruptly, with a *Conjunction Copulative*, [AND the Word of the Lord came to *Jonah*] (for so it should be read, and in the Bishop's Bible it is, The Word of the Lord came ALSO to *Jonah*;) which has made some Commentators think, this was but an *Appendix* to some other Writing of his, or of some other concerning him: So it ends abruptly also; giving no Account what became of the *Ninevites*, or of *Jonah* himself after this.

T H E
B O O K
O F
A M O S.

WHILE *Jonah* was thus exercised at *Nineveh*, *Amos* 1. A. M. 3198. the Prophet *Amos* was employed among the *Israelites*. He was an *Herdsmen* belonging to *Tekoa*, a Town in *Judea*, not far from *Jerusalem* (the same Place from which *Joab* fetcht that wise Woman, whom he employed to work King *David*, to recall his Son *Abshalom* from Banishment, 2 *Sam.* 14. 2.

He dates the Beginning of his Prophecy from *Two Years before the Earthquake*. Of which we have not any Account, that I remember, in the Holy Scriptures, unless it be in a transient Passage in the Book of *Zechariah* (a succeeding Prophet) who in *Chap.* 14. 5. mentions an *Earthquake* in the Days of *Uzziah* King of *Judah*, who was Contemporary with *Jeroboam* the Second Son of *Joash* King of *Israel*; under whom, and towards the latter end of whose Reign, this Prophet *Amos* prophesied.

Tho' by Birth and Habitation he was of *Judah*, yet he prophesied in *Israel*, and chiefly concerning *Israel*. First against the Enemies of *Israel*, the *Syrians*, the *Philistines*, the *Tyrians*, the *Edomites*, the *Ammonites*, and the *Moabites*, every one distinctly, in the First Chapter, and beginning of the Second; denouncing to each their Judgment, and the Cause thereof. And by a particular Form of Speech, [*viz.* For Three Transgressions and for Four] used alike to them all, he shews it was not for a few Offences, that those Judgments were denounced: But that they had run on in a Course of Sinning; and had provoked the Lord to the height. Then turning to *Judah* and *Israel*, he treats them in the same Style: But spends the greatest part of his Book upon *Israel*; which at that time was by much the worst of the Two.

But because to Analyse this, and the rest of the Prophets, as in course they fall in the way, would both too much swell the Bulk of this Book; and too much break, and discontinue the Thread of the History: I shall only touch those Passages here, which seem to be Historical.

The Prophet having denounced great Judgments against *Israel* in General, as of *Famine*, *Fire*, *Sword*, *Captivity*, &c. and against the House of *Jeroboam* in particular, saying, *I will rise against the House of Jeroboam with the Sword*, *Chap.* 7. 9. *Amaziah*, the Idolatrous Priest of *Beth-el* (hating, and contriving Destruction to *Amos*, as generally the false

false Prophets to do the *true*) drew up a Charge of High-Treason against him, and sent it to the King, saying, *Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the House of Israel: The Land is not able to bear all his Words. For thus (said he) Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the Sword.*

Amos 7.

This was not only an *envious*, but a *false* Charge: For *Amos* did not say *Jeroboam (himself)* should die by the Sword; neither did he so die (see 2 Kings 14. 29.) But, speaking in the Person of God, he said, *I will rise against the House* (that is, the Posterity) of *Jeroboam with the Sword, Amos 7. 9.* which was fulfilled on *Zachariah*, the Son of this *Jeroboam*, 2 Kings 15. 10.

But lest this Accusation should not take place with the King, the wicked Priest attempted to *scare* the Prophet, and make him fly the Country.

O *thou Seer* (said he to *Amos*) Go, flee thee away into the Land of *Judah*, and there eat Bread, and prophesie there. But prophesie not again any more at *Beth-el* (where one of the Idol-Calves was set up:) For it is not only the King's Chappel, but the King's Court too.

To this insulting Charge the gentle Prophet, *Amos* mildly answered, 'I was no Prophet, neither was I a Prophet's Son (as if he had said, I was not bred at the University, nor trained up at School, to be made a Prophet; neither was I a Prophet by Succession: Nor yet did I take up the Employment as a Trade, for a Livelihood.) 'But I was 'an Herdsman, and gathered Sycamore Fruit (or wild Figs) for my Living. And the Lord took me, as I followed the Flock: And the Lord 'said unto me, Go, Prophesie unto my People *Israel*. Now therefore (added he, his Spirit rising in somewhat an higher Strain, from a Sense of this Idolatrous Priest's Presumption, in taking upon him to Countermand his Commission) 'Thou that sayest, Prophesie not against *Israel*, 'Hear thou the Word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord, Thy Wife shall 'be an Harlot in the City, and thy Sons and thy Daughters shall fall by the 'Sword, and thy Land shall be divided by Line, and thou shalt die in a 'polluted Land: And *Israel* shall surely go into Captivity forth of this 'Land.

What was the Issue of this Contest between this *envious* Priest and the good Prophet *Amos*, doth not appear: Nor do I find any mention of him, in any other Place of the Holy Text.

T H E
B O O K
O F
H O S E A.

CONTEMPORARY with *Amos* was the Prophet *Hosea*; *Hosea 1.*
A. M.
3200. who under this *Jeroboam*, the Son of *Joash*, King of *Israel*, began also to Prophesie: But so near the end of his Reign, that the greatest part of his Prophecies fall under the Reigns of his Successors, even to the time wherein *Israel* was carried into Captivity, For tho' no more of the Kings of *Israel* are named in his Prophecy, but this *Jeroboam*, under whom he began to exercise the *Prophetick Function*: Yet he continued to prophesie in the Reigns of Four Kings of *Judah*, viz. of *Uzziah* (who was contemporary with this *Jeroboam*) and of *Jotham*, *Abaz*, and *Hezekiah*; in the Sixth Year of whose Reign that Captivity began, *2 Kings* 18. 10. Of which in several parts of his Prophecies, this Holy Prophet forewarned them.

And indeed, the Book of *Hosea* contains *Expostulations* between God and his People; *Exprobations* of their *Ingratitude* for Benefits received; *Objurgations*, or Reproofs, for their *Idolatries* and manifold Sins; *Admonitions* to repent, and turn to the Lord; *Comminations*, or Threatenings of great Judgments and Punishments, if they repented not; with *gracious Promises* of Pardon and Acceptance, if they did repent, amend, and heartily return to the Lord.

But no part of it being *Historical*, I shall only note to the Reader, that as it relates to, and treats of the times of the Kings of *Israel*, from the latter part of the Reign of *Jeroboam the Second*, to the time of the Captivity of the *Ten Tribes* by *Salmanezar*; and from the latter part of the Reign of *Uzziah*, through the Reigns of *Jotham* and *Abaz*, and into the beginning of the Reign of *Hezekiah*, Kings of *Judah*: So it may with best understanding, and to most advantage, be read along with the Stories of those Times, which are related in the 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18th Chapters of the Second Book of the *Kings*; and in the 16, 17, and 18th Chapters of the Second Book of the *Chronicles*.

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T H E
B O O K
O F
J O E L.

ABOUT this time also, it is supposed, the Prophet *Joel* 1. *Joel* both lived and prophesied, if not rather a *little after*: For some refer him to the time of *Uzziah*; *A. M.* 3200. others to the time of *Hezekiah*, Kings of *Judah*. And perhaps he might prophesie *under both*, as did *Hosea*, and *Isaiah*; with whom it is thought he was *contemporary*.

As his Prophecy is generally held to relate to the *Jews* (that is, the *House of Judah only*;) So the general scope of it is to set forth, in the *most sensible* manner, the *grievous Judgments*, that either were then *already come*, or were *at hand*, ready to come upon them from the Lord; in order to bring them to a *due sense of their sinful Estate*, to an *hearty Sorrow* for it, and *true Repentance* of it. With *Direction* how to manifest their Repentance; and *Assurance*, that if they did so, the Lord would yet be *gracious* to them: And would not only remove the *Famine* they suffered under (by removing the *Drought* that had caused it, and sending *Rain* which would produce *Plenty* of good things for them;) but would *ease* them also of the *Fears* they were in, by removing from them the *Northern Army*, which probably might be that of *Sennacherib*, the haughty King of *Assyria*, who, by *Rabshekah*, sent them such threatening Messages, in King *Hezekiah's* time.

But *eminently remarkable*, and *exceeding precious*, are those Parts of his Prophecy, which *glance at the Glory of the Gospel-Times*; wherein (amongst other Blessings) is promised the *general pouring forth of the Spirit* of God upon *all Flesh*, in *all Degrees and Stations* of Men, whether *High or Low, Bond or Free, Male or Female*: The effects of which should appear in their both *Sons and Daughters* Propheying, *Joel* 2. 28, 29. Which the Apostle *Peter*, long after, yet in the Beginning of the Christian Church, applied to that great *Effusion of the Spirit* upon the Apostles, and the rest of the Believers, assembled at *Jerusalem*, soon after the Ascension of our blessed Lord, *Acts* 2. 16, &c.

Having thus given these brief Accounts of such of the Holy Prophets as have fallen into this part of our History; let us now return to the Kings again, under whom they prophesied: And leaving the Second *Jeroboam* still sitting on the Throne of *Israel*, let us go on a while with the Succession of the Kings of *Judah*.

After

After the Death of King *Amaziah*, who (as is noted before) was
 2 Kin. 15. slain by his own Subjects at *Lachish*, 2 Kings 14. 19. all the People of
 2 Chr. 26. *Judah* took *Azariah* (called otherwise *Uzziah*, 2 Chron. 26. 1.) and
 made him King in his Father's stead.

The first publick Act of his, that we read of was the Building,
 (or perhaps Rebuilding rather) of *Eloth*, or *Elat*, a City near the Red-
 Sea, which he had recovered to *Judah*. Afterwards he went forth, and
 warred against the *Philistines*; and having dismantled *Gath*, *Jabneh*,
 and *Ashdod*, Cities of prime note in *Philistia* (by breaking down their
 Walls) he built Cities about *Ashdod*, and in other Places among the *Phi-
 listines*. For God helped him against the *Philistines*, and against the
Arabians, and the *Nebunims* (supposed to be Remainers of the *Ca-
 naanites*) and against the *Ammonites* also; so; who as a Token of
 Subjection, gave him Gifts: So that his Name spread abroad, even
 as far as *Egypt*.

And indeed, he had greatly strengthened himself. For he had an Host
 of Three Hundred and Seven Thousand and Five Hundred fighting
 Men, well Armed with Shields and Spears, and Helmets, and Haberge-
 ons, Bows and Arrows, and Slings to cast Stones. And over this Host,
 Two Thousand and Six Hundred of the chief of the Fathers, mighty
 Men of Valour, were the principal Commanders. Then for *Fortifica-
 tions*, he built *Towers* in several parts of *Jerusalem*; upon which, and
 upon the *Bulwarks*, he planted *Engines*, invented by cunning Men, to
 shoot Arrows and Stones withal.

He built *Towers* in the Desert also; and digged many Wells: Which
 probably he did for the Accommodation, and Safety of his Servants and
 Cattel, for he had much Cattel, both in the Low Country, and in the
 Plains; *Husbandmen* also, and *Vine-dressers*, as well in the Mountains,
 as in the fruitful Fields: For he loved Husbandry.

In his Youth, and during the greatest part of his Reign, so long
 at least, as *Zechariah* lived (who had Understanding in the Visions of
 God) he sought God, and did that which was right in the Sight of the
 Lord. And as long as he sought the Lord, the Lord made him to
 prosper, and helped him: So that he grew marvellous strong. But *Pro-
 sperity hurt him*. For when he was become strong, his Heart was lifted
 up to his Destruction, and he transgressed against the Lord his God: For
 he would needs go into the Temple of the Lord, to burn Incense upon
 the Altar.

A. M. 3240. Which when *Azariah* the Priest saw, he went in after him, with *Four-
 score* Priests of the Lord, that were valiant Men; and withstood *Uzziah*
 the King: telling him, it did not belong to him, (tho' he was their
 King) to burn Incense to the Lord; but to the Priests, the Sons of *Aaron*,
 who were consecrated to that Service. Wherefore they bid him,
Go out of the Sanctuary: Letting him know, that he had transgressed
 in coming there; and that what he had done should not be for his
 Honour from the Lord God.

The King had a *Censer* in his Hand, ready to burn *Incense*, when
 he received this *Repulse* from the Priests: And his high Spirit not brock-
 ing to be so treated by his Subjects, he grew wroth with the Priests. But
 while in his Anger he stood contending with them, the *Leprosie* rose
 up in his Forehead. Which the Priests observing, they without more
 ado, thrust him out of the House of the Lord: Yea, he himself
 hastened to get out, being sensible, that the Lord had smitten him.

Nor did he ever recover of this Disease, but was a *Leper* to his dying
 Day; and dwelt apart, in a distinct House as a *Leper*: For he was
 cut off from having any Access to the House of the Lord; and forham
 his

his Son, as *Vice-Roy*, was over the King's House, and administered Justice to the People of the Land, during the Remainder of the King's Life. ^{2 Kin. 19.}

At length this *leprous King* died, after a Reign of Two and Fifty Years; and was buried with his Fathers: That is, in the same Field wherein the *Royal Sepulchres* were; but at some distance from them, because he was a *Leper*.

As the Prophets, *Jonah*, *Amos*, *Hosea* and *Joel*, began their Prophecies under *Jeroboam* King of *Israel*, and this *Uzziah* King of *Judah*: So the Noble Prophet *Isaiah* (Noble by Birth,) as being of the *Blood Royal*, and more enobled by his *Prophetick Gift*, (especially after the holy *Seraphim* had touched his Lips with a live Coal, taken from the Altar) began to Prophecy under this King *Uzziah*; but towards the latter end of his Reign, after he for his *Leprosie*, lived privately, and *Jotham* his Son ruled for him. Within the compass of which time, the first Six Chapters of *Isaiah's* Prophecy seem to have been written: And the last of them expressly in the Year that King *Uzziah* died.

When *Uzziah* was dead, his Son *Jotham*, who before had ruled only as *Pro-Rex*, reigned as King for Sixteen Years; doing that which was right in the Sight of the Lord, as his Father *Uzziah* had done. Whose great *Miscarriage* was his *Presumption*, in entering into the Sanctuary of the Lord, and attempting to offer Incense there: Which therefore his Son *Jotham*, taking warning by his Harm, warily abstained from, ^{A. M. 3250.} *2 Chron. 27. 1, 2.* But the Body of the People yet acted corruptly: for the High-places not being removed, they still sacrificed, and burnt Incense there.

Amongst other Publick Acts, *Jotham* built the High-gate of the House of the Lord; and besides what he built on the Wall of the Tower (which was not a little) he built Cities in the Mountains of *Judah*, and in the Forests he built Castles and Towers.

Neither was he unsuccessful in his Wars: For beside the Trouble he had from the Kings of both *Syria* and *Israel*, he fought with the *Ammonites*, and prevailed against them; so that for several Years they paid him yearly an Hundred Talents of Silver. Ten Thousand Measures of *Wheat*, and as much of *Barley*, of that Measure which is called a *Cor*, which is computed to contain Five Bushels and Five Gallons.

T H E
B O O K
O F
M I C A H.

IN the time of this King *Jotham* began the Prophet *Micah* to prophesie; and continued through his Reign, and the Reigns of his Son and Grandson, *Abaz* and *Hezekiah*. Together with the Stories of these Kings, and of their *Contemporary* Kings of *Israel*, his Prophecy will be read most advantageously. For it relates to both the Kingdoms of *Israel* and *Judah*; Denouncing great Judgments unto them, for their many and great Transgressions therein set forth: Intermingling sometimes some Comfortable Promises of Deliverance and Restoration, to bear them up from utterly fainting, under the Exercises they should meet withal.

Micah 1.
A. M.
3260.

Let us now, leaving *Jotham* on the Throne of *Judah*, observe with what a swift Motion, the Wheel of Government whirled round in the Kingdom of *Israel*.

Jeroboam the Son of *Joash* being dead, 2 Kings 14. 29. his Son *Zachariah* succeeded to the Crown of *Israel*, in the Eight and Thirtieth Year of *Uzziah* King of *Judah*. But as he did that which was Evil in the Sight of the Lord, as his Fathers had done (not departing from the Sins of *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*, the *Calvish* Idols, whereby he made *Israel* to sin :) So he enjoyed the Crown but a little while. For at the End of Six Months, *Shallum* the Son of *Jabesh* conspiring against him, smote him before the People; and having slain him, reigned in his stead.

2 Kings
15. 2.

This *Zachariah* was the Fourth from *Jehu*, and the last King of his Race; in whom was fulfilled that gracious Promise, which the Lord was pleased to make to *Jehu*, as a Reward for his Courage, Zeal and Diligence, in executing the Judgment, which God had commanded him to execute upon the House of *Ahab*: That he and his Seed should sit on the Throne of *Israel*, unto the Fourth Generation.

But the Measure which *Shallum* measured to *Zachariah*, was measured to him again, with this Odds; that whereas *Zachariah* reigned Six Months, *Shallum* reigned but one. For *Menahem* the Son of *Gadi*, going up from *Tirzah* to *Samaria*, smote *Shallum* there; and having slain him, possessed himself of the Kingdom.

For an Account of the rest of the Acts of these Three Kings, *Zachariah*, *Shallum* and *Menahem*, we are referr'd to the Book of the *Chronicles* of the Kings of *Israel*: Of whom yet no mention is made, so much as by Name, in either of those Books of *Chronicles* which we have. Which makes it still more evident, that that Book, so often referr'd to, is lost.

As

As soon as *Menahem* was settled on the Throne, he smote *Tiphshah* (a ^{2 Kin. 15.} City of *Israel*) and all that were therein, and in the Coasts thereof; because they did not open their Gates to receive him, or declare for him. And so, inhumanly barbarous was he, that when he had taken the Place, he ripped up all the Women therein, that were with Child.

These were very bloody times; wherein Violence, Murders, Rapins, and all manner of Immoralities, as well as Superstitions and Idolatries, reigned: For all the Kings of *Israel*, from *Jehu*, did Evil in the Sight of the Lord. So that there was abundant matter for the Prophets [*Hosea*, *Amos*, *Micah*, yea and *Isaiah* too] to declaim against.

But when the Admonitions, Reproofs and Threatnings by the Prophets, did not prevail to reclaim the People, the Lord stirred up the Spirit of *Pul*, King of *Assyria* (whom some take to be that King of *Nineveh*, then the chief City of the *Assyrian* Monarchy, who is said to have repented at the Preaching of *Jonah*) to come up against the Land, ^{1 Chron. 5. 26.} Which when *Menahem*, *Israel's* new King, understood he Politickly stooped to *Pul*; and making him a Present of a Thousand Talents of Silver (Three Hundred Seventy Five Thousand Pounds) which he raised out of all the wealthy Men of *Israel*, exacting from each Man Fifty Shekels: He thereby prevailed with King *Pul*, not only to withdraw his Forces out of the Land; but before he went, to confirm the Kingdom in his Hand.

By this means he possessed the Crown Ten Years; and then dying, left it to *Pekabiah* his Son: Who kept it but Two Years. For he following the Steps of his Father, who did Evil in the Sight of the Lord, and walking in the Sin (the Calf-worship) of *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*; *Peka*, a Captain of his, entering a Conspiracy against him, with *Argob* and *Arieh*, and Fifty Men of the *Gileadites*, smote him in the King's Palace in *Samaria*: And having slain him, reigned in his stead. But he too, like the rest that went before him, did Evil in the Sight of the Lord, not departing from the Sins of *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*, who made *Israel* to sin.

^{2 Kin. 16.} In the Seventeenth Year of *Pekab's* Reign, *Jotham* King of *Judah*,
^{A.M.} dying, *Abaz*, his Son, ascended the Throne of that Kingdom; and proved
^{3267.} a very wicked King. For he not only did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord, like his Ancestor King *David*: But he walked in the Ways of the Kings of *Israel*; even the worst of them. For he made molten Images for *Baalim* (the whole Herd of Lesser Gods, worshipped by the Heathen.) He sacrificed, and burnt Incense in the High-places, and on the Hills, and under every green Tree. Nay he burnt Incense in the Valley of the Son of *Hinnom*, (a Place not far from *Jerusalem*) and made his Son to pass through the Fire, according to the Abominations of the Heathen, whom the Lord had cast out from before the Children of *Israel*.

This passing through the Fire, Interpreters say was done, either by causing the Child to pass to *Molech* between Two Fires, made near one to the other for that Purpose; whereby the Child was not killed, but consecrated to that Idol: Or by shutting up the Child in the Body of that Idol, which was made of Brass, in the Shape of a Man (save that his Head was like the Head of an Ox) so great in Bulk, that his Body was divided or parted within, into Seven distinct Chappels or Cels, into one of which the Child to be sacrificed being put, was burnt to death by the Heat, which a Fire from without sent in through the Brass. And that the Shrieks and Out-cries of the Children, thus tormented, might not be heard by the Parents, or others standing by, Drums mean while were beaten; from whence the Place was called
Tophet,

Tophet, which signifies a *Drum*: as *Marius D' Affigny* tells us in his *History of the Heathen Gods*, Book 3. p. 21, 22. And probable it is that ^{2 Kin. 16.} ^{2 Chr. 28.} so *Abaz* his Son (or Children) was served: For whereas the Text in *Kings* says, He made his Son to *pass through the Fire*; the Text in *Chronicles* hath it, *He burnt his Children in the Fire*.

For these so many and so great *Abominations*, the Lord punished *Abaz* and *Judah* by the Kings of *Syria* and of *Israel*. But here arises some *Disagreement* in the Story, as it is related in the Book of the *Kings*, and in the Book of the *Chronicles*.

For in 2 *Chron.* 28. 5, &c. we read, That the Lord delivered *Abaz* into the Hand of the King of *Syria*; who *smote him*, and carried away a great *Multitude* of his People *Captives* to *Damascus*. And that he was delivered also into the Hand of *Pekah* King of *Israel*, who *smote him* with a great *Slaughter*; slaying in one Day an Hundred and Twenty Thousand valiant Men of *Judah*, and carrying away *Captives* to *Samaria* Two Hundred Thousand Women and Children, with much *Spoil*.

On the other hand, in 2 *Kings* 16. 5. it is said, That *Rezin* King of *Syria*, and *Pekah* Son of *Remaliah*, King of *Israel*, came up to *Jerusalem* to war: And they *besieged Abaz*; but *could not overcome him*. The same Account also we have of it, by the Prophet *Isaiah*, where he says ^{Isaiah.} expressly, That in the Days of this King *Abaz*, *Rezin* the King of *Syria*, and *Pekah* the Son of *Remaliah* King of *Israel*, went up towards *Jerusalem*, to war against it: But *could not prevail* against it.

To accommodate this *Diversity*, in the Relation, Let us suppose, either that the Account given of this matter in the Book of the *Kings*, and by the Prophet *Isaiah*, related to *one* time; and that which is given in the Book of *Chronicles*, to *another*: Or, that those Two Kings of *Syria* and *Israel*, tho' with their Joint-Forces they did besiege *Jerusalem*, *could not take the City*, but were forced to raise their *Siege*: And then committed those *other Hostilities*, whereby they slew, and took *Captive* so many, in other parts of the Kingdom.

For there seems to be no ground for Suspicion of any *Mistake* of the Scribe in either Place: The Text in *Kings* and in the Prophecy of *Isaiah* agreeing, tho' not written by the same Hand. And altho' the Account is given but short and naked in the Book of *Kings*: Yet in the Prophecy of *Isaiah* it is set forth at large, with many *confirming Circumstances*. And so truly is the other Relation also, which is given 2 *Chron.* 28.

With respect to the *Siege* of *Jerusalem*, the Prophet *Isaiah* sets forth, That when King *Abaz* and his People quivered for fear, at the Report of the Two Kings of *Syria* and *Israel*, coming with *united Forces* against them; the Lord sent him forth to meet *Abaz*, and to bid him take heed and be quiet, and not fear, nor be faint-hearted, because of the Two *Tails* of those smoaking *Firebrands*, for the fierce Anger of *Rezin* with *Syria*, and of the Son of *Remaliah* (who was *Pekah*, King of *Israel*;) For tho', said he, they have taken Evil Counsel against thee, saying, Let us go up against *Judah*, and *vex* it, and let us make a Breach therein for us, and set up a King (of our own making) in the midst of it, even the Son of *Tabeal* (uncertain whom, or whence: Some think a *Syrian*, others an *Israelite*) yet thus saith the Lord God, *It shall not stand*, neither shall it come to pass. For the Head of *Syria* is *Damascus*, and the Head of *Damascus* is *Rezin*. And the Head of *Ephraim* is *Samaria*, and the Head of *Samaria* is *Remaliah's* Son (*Pekah*.) But within Threescore and Five Years shall *Ephraim* be broken, that it be not a People.

Nor is the Relation of the many Prisoners, which the *Israelites* took of *Judah*, and carried Captive, with the Spoil to *Samaria*, less supported
 2 Kin. 16. 2 Chr. 28. with remarkable Circumstances.

For we read in 2 *Chron.* 28. That when they brought in their Captives to *Samaria*, a Prophet of the Lord, whose Name was *Oded*, went out to them, and thus reprov'd the *Israelitish* Army, both for the Slaughter they had made, and the Prisoners they had taken.

'Behold, said he, because the Lord God of your Fathers was wroth with *Judah*, he hath delivered them into your Hand, and ye have slain them in a Rage, that reacheth up unto Heaven. And now ye purpose to keep under the Children of *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, for Bondmen and Bondwomen unto you. But are there not even with you also Sins against the Lord your God? Now therefore, hear ye me; and deliver the Prisoners again, which ye have taken Captive of your Brethren: For the fierce Wrath of God is upon you.

This stirr'd certain of the Heads of the Children of *Ephraim* (who are here put for *Israel*) to stand up against them that came from the War; and say to them, Ye shall not bring the Captives hither: For whereas we have offended against the Lord, ye go the way to add more to our Sins, and to our Trespas; which is so great already, that there is fierce Wrath against *Israel*.

The Soldiers thereupon leaving both the Captives and the Spoil before the Princes, and the Congregation, the Principal Rulers took the Captives; and having with the Spoil clothed and shod all such of them, as had been stripp'd by the Soldiers, they gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them (dressing the Wounds of such of them as were hurt:) And setting the feeble of them upon Asses, brought them to *Jericho* to their Brethren; themselves returning to *Samaria*.

However it was, this is evident, that altho' the Lord had by his Prophet assur'd *Abaz*, that the *Syrians* with *Israel* should not prevail, to take the City *Jerusalem*; and offer'd to confirm it to him by whatsoever Sign he would ask: Yet would not that stubborn King ask any Sign (under an Hypocritical pretence, that he would not tempt God;) neither yet would he trust to the Lord for Preservation and Deliverance. But he sent to the King of *Assyria* to come and help him: And to induce him thereunto, sent him for a Present the Silver, and the Gold that was found in the House of the Lord, and in the King's Treasury: Offering to become a Tributary to him, and giving his Ambassadors in charge, to say to the *Assyrian* Monarch in his Name, I am thy Servant and thy Son; Come up, and save me out of the Hand of the King of *Syria*, and of the King of *Israel*, which rise up against me.

Tiglath-pileser, the then King of *Assyria* (call'd also *Tilgath-pilneser*, 2 *Chron.* 28. 20.) was not backward to come. Yet before he could come, *Rezin* King of *Syria* had recovered from *Judah*, the City *Elat*; which King *Uzziah*, Grandfather of *Abaz*, had taken from the *Syrians* and driving the *Jews* from thence, replanted his *Syrians* therein.

A. M. 3272. But when *Tiglath-pileser*, was come, he made short work with *Rezin*, for drawing up his Army against *Damascus*, he took it: And having slain King *Rezin*, he carried away the People of *Damascus* Captives to *Kir*; which *Tremellius* takes to be a City or Place in *Media*, subject to the *Assyrian* Monarchy, and from thence call'd afterwards *Syromedia*. And herein *Tiglath-pileser* answer'd his Name, which signifies, He hath taken away a marvellous Captivity.

This spoiling of *Damascus* the Prophet *Isaiah* foresaw and foretold, not only in some darker Passages in the Seventh Chapter of his Prophecy: But openly and directly in the Eighth Chapter. Where hav-
 ing

ing typically represented his going in unto his Wife, she thereupon Conceiving, and bearing a Son, whose Name he called *Maher-shalal-hashbaz* (that is, *In making speed to the Spoil, he hasteneth the Prey*) and his Recording all this by God's Command, in a great Roll, before sufficient Witnesses: He told them expressly, that before that Child should have Knowledge to cry, *My Father*, and *my Mother*, the Riches of *Damascus*; and the Spoil of *Samaria*, shall be taken away before the King of *Assyria*, *Isa. 8. 4.* And altho' he joins there the Spoil of *Samaria* with that of *Damascus*; the sequel of the Story will shortly shew the completing of that also. And as he there foretold it, just before it came: So in the Seventeenth Chapter of his Prophecy, he speaks of it again, *as come.*

Nor did *Isaiah* only fore-shew this Stroke upon *Damascus*: But his Contemporary, the Prophet *Amos*, that poor, plain *Herdman*, foretold it in direct Terms. These are his Words, 'Thus saith the Lord, For Three Transgressions of *Damascus*, and for Four, I will not turn away the Punishment thereof; because they have threshed *Gilead* (a part of the Country of *Israel*) with threshing Instruments of Iron: But I will send a Fire into the House of *Hazael*, which shall devour the Palaces of *Ben-hadad* (Two Kings of *Syria*, Father and Son, great Oppressors of *Israel*.) I will break also the Bar of *Damascus*, and cut off the Inhabitant from the Plain of *Aven*, and him that holdeth the Scepter from the House of *Eden*; And the People of *Syria* (for those Three Places, *Damascus*, *Aven*, and *Eden*, are taken to comprehend the whole Kingdom of *Syria*.) Shall go into Captivity unto *Kir*, saith the Lord, *Amos 1. 3, &c.* see also Chap. 3. 12.

When King *Abaz* understood, that the *Assyrian* King was come to *Damascus*; he hastened thither to him. And being there, he saw an *Altar*; which, for the Form thereof, much pleased him: Wherefore causing a *Pattern* of it to be exactly taken, he sent it to *Urijah* the Priest at *Jerusalem*; for him to make such another by it. The Priest (instead of instructing the King better, as his Office required) being, it seems, an *Hypocritical Time-server*, built an *Altar*, by that *Pattern*, against King *Abaz* came back from *Damascus*.

Now when the King, being returned, found this *new Altar* ready, he not only offered thereon; but caused the *Altar* of the Lord (the *brazen Altar* which stood before the Lord) to be brought from the *Fore-front* of the House of the Lord, and (that it might not stand between his *Altar* and the House of the Lord) he set it on the North side of this *Altar* of his: Commanding *Urijah* the Priest to offer all the *Burnt-offerings* at this *Altar*; and reserve the *Brazen Altar* for him to Enquire of the Lord by. And that *Temporizing Priest* did all this, just as the King commanded him.

Nor was this the only *Innovation* that *Abaz* made, in the things belonging to the Worship of God. But he also cut off the *Borders* of the *Bases* (mentioned in *1 Kings 7. 27, &c.*) and removed the *Laver* from off them, *ver. 38.* and took down the *Sea* from off the *Brazen Oxen*, *ver. 23.* and set it upon a Pavement of Stones. The *Covert* also for the Sabbath, (which was built to receive and shelter the Priests that attended from Sabbath to Sabbath;) together with the King's *Entry*, turned he from the House of the Lord, because of the King of *Assyria*. Which is taken to have been done, either in *Flattery*, to please the King of *Assyria*; by shewing him, how little he regarded the Ordinances of the Lord: Or else for *Fear* of the King of *Assyria*, and to secure himself, in case the King of *Assyria* should assail him also; which he had some Reason to doubt. For tho' the King of *Assyria*, at his Request, came

came and smote his Enemies; yet he did no otherwise help him: Nay,
 2 Kin 16. he is said to have distressed him; but not strengthened him, 2 Chron.
 2 Chr. 28. 28. 20.

And indeed, if the *Assyrian* had then come on against *Abaz*, he was but in an ill Condition to have withstood him. For because of his fore Transgressions, whereby he had made *Judah* naked, the Lord had brought *Judah* Low. For on the one hand, the *Edomites* had come again, and smitten *Judah*, and carried away Captives: On the other hand, the *Philistines* invading the Cities of the Low-Country, and of the South of *Judah*, had taken many Cities, with their Villages, and seated themselves therein.

But tho' *Abaz* was thus distressed, yet did he still trespass the more against the Lord. For he not only set up an Altar of the Heathenish Fashion: But he Sacrificed also unto the Gods of *Damascus*, which had smitten him. This he did, to make them propitious to him. For, said he, *Because the Gods of the Kings of Syria help them, I will Sacrifice to them, that they may help me*: But they were the Ruin of him, and of all *Israel*; where *Israel* is set for *Judah*.

Besides all this, he gathered together the Vessels of the House of the Lord, and cut them to pieces; and then shutting up the Doors of the House of the Lord, he made Altars in every Corner of *Jerusalem*: And in all the several Cities of *Judah*, he made High-places, to burn Incense in unto others Gods; so provoking to Anger the Lord God of his Fathers.

This was that King *Abaz*. At length, having Reigned Sixteen Years, he died, and was buried in the City of *Jerusalem*: But they brought him not into the Sepulchres of the Kings.

But *Abaz* lived to see *Pekah* King of *Israel* (who had joined with *Rezin* King of *Syria* against him) distressed as well as himself. For *Tiglath-pileser*, the *Assyrian* King, having spoiled *Damascus*, the Metropolis of *Syria*, fell upon *Ijon*, and *Abel-Beth-Maachab*, *Janoah* and *Kedesb*, *Hazor*, *Gilead* and *Galilee*, and all the Land of *Naphtali* (Cities and Countries belonging to *Israel*) and carried the Inhabitants Captive to *Assyria*. This perhaps might give Encouragement to *Hoshea* the Son of *Elah*, to conspire against *Pekah*: For quickly after this, he slew him, and Reigned in his stead.

2 Kin. 17. *Hoshea* took the Kingdom with all its Incumbrances, which by this time were grown to be many and great. For tho' he himself passed in the middle Rank of the bad Kings; doing Evil in the sight of the Lord: But not as some of the Kings of *Israel* that had been before him. Yet the Kings his Predecessors, with the Body of the People, having through a long Series of Time, gone on in a Course of Disobedience, and Rebellion against the Lord; slighting the Admonitions, and disregarding the Threatnings of the Lord by his Prophets, had so highly provoked the Lord, that now he sent the King of *Assyria*, whom he called the Rod of his Anger, *Isa. 10. 5.* to call them to an Account. So that *Hoshea* was scarce settled on the Throne, when *Salmaneser*, the *Assyrian* King, came up against him.

Hoshea, for that time, pacified him with Submission; subjecting himself to him as a Tributary-prince, and making him ample Presents. But this served not long. For after a while, *Hoshea* neglected to pay his Tribute; and withal tampered with *So*, King of *Egypt*, to assist him to cast off the *Assyrian* Yoke, which he had so lately taken on him. Which when *Salmaneser* understood, he came up with his Forces through all the Land, and laid Siege to *Samaria*.

Three Years *Samaria* held out the Siege, before the *Assyrian* could take it. But at the Three Years end (which was the Ninth Year of *Hoshea*) ^{2 Kin. 17. A. M. 3284.} *Salmaneser* took *Samaria*; and shutting up King *Hoshea* in Prison, and in Bonds, he carried *Israel* away Captives into *Assyria*, and placed them in *Halab* and in *Habor*, by the River of *Gozan*, and in the Cities of the *Medes*. Among these Captives, *Tobit*, then a young Man, was one; whose Story hath a distinct Book in the *Apocrypha*.

Thus were the Ten Tribes dispossessed of the Land of *Canaan*; the Land promised to *Israel* their Father, whose Name they bore. And that the Justice of God may appear in thus Disinheriting them, the Cause is set forth, with great Amplification, in this 17th Chapter of the Second Book of *Kings*, from ver. 7. to 24. But is contracted into this brief Sum, Chap. 18. 12. *Because they obeyed not the Voice of the Lord their God; but transgressed his Covenant, and all that Moses, the Servant of the Lord, had commanded: And would not hear them, nor do them.*

All the Prophets of God, who prophesied in those times, foretold this Captivity. As the Prophet *Isaiah*, Chap. 8. 4. and Chap. 9. 9. to the end. The Prophet *Hosea*, Chap. 8. Ver. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. and Chap. 10. Verse 5, 6, 7, 14, 15. and Chap. 13. 16. The Prophet *Amos*, Chap. 3. 9. to the end; Chap. 5. 2, 3, 5. Chap. 6. 7. and 7. 17. And the Prophet *Micah*, Chap. 1. 5, 6, &c. and Chap. 2. 3, 4, &c.

The *Israelites* being thus carried out of their own Land into *Assyria*, the *Assyrian* King drew forth divers Colonies, of his People from *Babylon*, and from *Cuthab*, and from *Ava*, and from *Sepharvaim* (Places belonging to that Monarchy) and sending them into the Land of *Canaan*, placed them in the Cities of *Samaria*, instead of the Children of *Israel*: And they possessing *Samaria*, dwelt in the Cities thereof.

This Re-peopling of *Samaria*, and the other Cities of *Israel*, is ascribed to *Esar-baddon*, *Ezra* 4. 2. But he being the Grandson of *Salmaneser*, by whom the Country was depopulated, it may be considered whether it be probable the Country lay waste, and uninhabited for so many Years, as were between the Grandfather and Grandson: And whether they who were sent by *Esar-baddon*, might not in likelihood be a Second Colony.

However, they who came first, at their first coming to dwell there, met with but rough Entertainment. For not fearing the Lord, (that is, not performing any sort of worship to him, but polluting the Holy Land with their several sorts of foul Idolatries:) the Lord sent Lions among them, which slew many of them.

This struck such Terror on the rest, that they sent Messengers to the King of *Assyria*, to complain of this Grievance; who acquainted him, That the Nations, which he had removed, and placed in the Cities of *Samaria*, were infested, and many of them slain by Lions, which the God of the Land had sent among them, because they, not knowing the manner how that God used to be served, had not performed any Worship to him.

The King thereupon, that he might provide for the safety of the People, gave order that one of the Priests, that had been brought, with the other Captives, out of the Land of *Israel*, should be carried back thither again; that he might dwell there, and teach these new Inhabitants the manner or way of Worship of the God of the Land. Whereupon one of those Captive Priests, returning with the Messengers, came and dwelt in *Beth-el*; and taught the People how they should fear the Lord: That is, how they should worship the Calf, as the degenerated *Israelites* had done.

Notwithstanding which, as the Colonies consisted of a *Medley* of
 2 *Kin. 17.* divers sorts of People, drawn out of several Provinces and Nations:
 So every Nation of them made Gods of their own (according to the
 manner of the Place they came from) and put them in the Houses of
 the High-places, which the *Israelites* (called here the *Samaritans*, be-
 cause *Samaria* was the Metropolis, or chief City of that Kingdom) had
 made, every Nation in their Cities wherein they dwelt.

For the Men that came from *Babylon* set up *Succoth-benoth*, for their
 God: Which *Godwyn* tells us, from the *Hebrew Doctors*, was the *Pic-
 ture of an Hen with her Chickens. Moses and Aaron, l. 4. c. 7.*

They that came from *Cuth* (or *Cuthath*) made *Nergal* their God:
 Which *Godwyn*, (*ubi supra*) says, The *Hebrew Doctors* interpret, *Gallum
 Sylvestrum*; and *Wilson* calls it a *Woodcock*. *Christian Dictionary, verbo
 Nergal.* But *D'Assigny* says, *Nergal* was a continual Fire. *Hist. of the
 Heathen Gods, Book first, Pag. 103.*

The Men of *Hamath* set up *Ashima* for their God, represented by
 a Goat. *Godwyn, ubi supra.*

The *Avites* had Two: *Nibhaz*, supposed to be the same with *Anu-
 bis*; which the *Egyptians* worshipped in the Image of a Dog: And
Tartak, in the form of an *Ass*. *Godwyn, ib.*

They that came from *Sepharavim* had Two also. *Adramelech* and
Anammelech. Which *Godwyn* (*ubi supra*) says, had the Representation,
 the former of a *Mule*; the latter of an *Horse*. But because the *Sephar-
 avites* are here said to burn their Children in the Fire to these Gods of
 theirs: Some have thence conjectured, that these Two Idols were the
 same with *Moloch* (or *Molech*) whose Name they have assumed. *Hist.
 of Heathen Gods, l. 1. p. 92.*

That these contemptible Gods might not want *suitable* Attendants,
 these new Planters made to themselves of the lowest amongst them,
Priests of the High-places, which sacrificed for them there. And thus
 they patched up a *Mungrel Religion*, fearing the Lord (that is, pretend-
 ing to worship him) yet serving their own Gods: Paying indifferently
 their Devotions to *Beth-el's Calf*, and their own Idols, with the same
 Rites, and after the same manner, as the *Israelites* had formerly done;
 according as they were instructed by their *Israelitish*, but *Apostate Priests*.

But as for the *Israelites*, who were gone into Captivity, all their
Afflictions and Distresses, even this last and greatest of perpetual Bondage,
 did not reclaim them: But they went on in their accustomed evil Courses,
 not fearing the Lord, nor doing nor keeping the Statutes, Ordinances,
 Law and Commandment, which the Lord had given to the Children of
Jacob, whom he named *Israel*.

This was the end of the *Israelitish Kingdom*; that is, of the *Ten
 Tribes*, which revolted from *Rehoboam* the Son of *Solomon*, and set
 up *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat* against him. And this was the Begin-
 ning and Rise of that *Mungrel-People*, who (from the City and Country
 of *Samaria*, where they lived) were afterwards called *Samaritans*: Ene-
 mies to the *Jews*; and, as such, rejected by them.

But *Judah's Day* was yet somewhat lengthened. For tho' *Abaz* (the
 last of her Kings that we have yet mentioned) had by his egregious
 Wickedness, drawn her Judgment somewhat forward: Yet his Son and
 Successor, *Hezekiah*, (a good Son of an evil Father) by his obedient
 and humble walking with the Lord, may be thought to have, for
 a while, protracted it. For he is said to have done that which was
 right in the Sight of the Lord, according to all that his Ancestor *Da-
 vid* did.

He began *early* to give Evidence of his Zeal for God, and for the true Worship of God. For in the *First* Year of his Reign (which was ^{2 Kin. 18.} the Five and Twentieth of his Age) and in the First Month of the Year, he caused the Doors of the House of the Lord (which his Father had shut up, ^{2 Chr. 29.} 2 Chron. 28. 24.) to be opened and repaired. Then having gathered the Priests and the Levites together, he gave them in charge, First to *sanctify themselves*, and then to sanctify the House of the Lord God of their Fathers, by carrying the Filthiness out of the Holy Place. For, said he, 'Our Fathers have *trespassed*, and done that which was 'Evil in the sight of the Lord our God; and have *forsaken* him: And 'turned away their Faces from the Habitation of the Lord; and have 'even *turned their Backs* upon it. They have also shut up the Doors of 'the Porch, and have put out the Lamps: And have not burned Incense nor offered Burnt-offerings in the Holy Place unto the God of 'Israel. Wherefore the Wrath of the Lord was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them into their Enemies Hands, as 'ye have seen. For our Fathers, ye know, have fallen by the Sword; 'and our Wives and Children were in Captivity for this. Wherein it is probable he had an Eye to the Slaughter, which Pekah, late King of Israel, had made of the Men of Judah, and the great number of Prisoners taken, in the time of King Abaz, his Father, 2 Chron. 28. 6. and 8.

Then going on, he tells them, 'Now it is in my Heart to make a 'Covenant with the Lord God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn 'away from us. Now therefore my Sons (said he) be not negligent: 'For the Lord hath chosen you to stand before him, that ye may serve 'him, and minister unto him, and burn Incense before him.

The Levites and the Priests, thus authorized and encouraged, gathered their Brethren together, and having *sanctified themselves*, came according to the Commandment of the King, to do the Lord's Business, in cleansing the House of the Lord. And the Priests going in to the inner part, brought out all the *uncleannefs* that they found in the Temple of the Lord, to the Levites: Who taking it of them, carried it out abroad, and cast it into the Brook Kidron (a Rivulet which ran in the Valley between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives, and in the New Testament is called Cedron, John 18. 1.) And such diligence they did use therein, that, beginning on the First Day of the First Month, they came on the Eighth Day to the Porch of the Lord. And having in Eight Days, cleansed the House of the Lord; they cleansed the outward Court in Eight Days more: So that by the Sixteenth Day of the same Month, they had made a full end.

Having then reported to King Hezekiah, that they had cleansed all the House of the Lord, and the Altar of Burnt-offering, and the Shewbread Table, with all the Vessels belonging to each. And moreover, that they had looked up all the Vessels, which his Father King Abaz had cast away in his Transgression, and had prepared and sanctified them, and set them before the Altar of the Lord: The King, with his Rulers, went early up to the House of the Lord, and offered Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices in such abundance, that the Priests were too few to slay them, and were glad to accept the help of their Brethren the Levites (who were *more upright*, and forward to sanctify themselves, than were the Priests) until the Work was ended, and till more of the Priests had sanctified themselves. And thus was the Service of the House of the Lord set in Order, to the mutual rejoicing of both King and People.

The way being thus *fairly opened* to a *thorough Reformation*, and so good a Progress made therein; the next step was the keeping of the Passover:

2 Kin. 18.
2 Chr. 30.

Passover: Which by reason of the *Division* of the Kingdom, and the frequent *Commutations*, Disturbances and Troubles that happened thereupon, had not been kept in due manner for a long time. But now, the King having advised with his Princes about it, it was determined, that, since it could not be kept in that *First Month* (which was the regular time for it) because neither had the Priests yet sanctified a sufficient Number of themselves for the Work, nor could the People have *timely notice* to assemble themselves together at *Jerusalem* to it: It should be kept in the *Second Month*, and Proclamation thereof should be made, from *Beer-sheba* even unto *Dan* (the whole Length of the Land of *Judea*;) that so not only the *Two Tribes* of the Kingdom of *Judah*, but all such also of the *Ten Tribes* of *Israel*, as, having escaped the Hands of the Kings of *Assyria*, were not gone into Captivity (For the *Assyrian Besom* had not swept all away) might have notice of it.

To that end, Letters were dispatch'd by Post, from the King and his Princes, throughout all *Israel* and *Judah*: And those that were directed to the *Remnant* of *Israel*, were thus worded:

' Ye Children of *Israel*, turn again unto the Lord God of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Israel*; and he will return to the *Remnant* of you that are escaped out of the Hand of the Kings of *Assyria*. And be not ye like your Fathers, and like your Brethren, who trespassed against the Lord God of their Fathers, and were therefore given up by him to *Desolation*, as ye see. Now be not ye *stiff-necked* as your Fathers were: But yield yourselves unto the Lord, and enter into his *Sanctuary*, which he hath sanctified for ever, and serve the Lord your God; that the fierceness of his Wrath may turn away from you. For if ye turn again unto the Lord your God, your Brethren, and your Children shall find Compassion before them that have led them Captive, so that they shall come again into this Land: For the Lord your God is gracious and merciful; and will not turn away his Face from you, if ye return to him.

With these Letters the Posts passed from City to City, through the Countries of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, even unto *Zebulun*: But they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them. So little of good had that great Calamity, which had so lately befallen their Brethren, wrought upon them. Nevertheless, divers of *Asher*, and of *Manasseh*, and of *Zebulun* too, humbled themselves, and came to *Jerusalem*.

But in *Judah*, the Power of God (figuratively expressed by his Hand) wrought so effectually, that with one Heart they applied themselves to do the Commandment of the King and of the Princes; which they were sensible proceeded from the Word of the Lord. So that there assembled at *Jerusalem* much People, a very great Congregation, to keep the Feast of unleavened Bread, in the Second Month.

But because the False Worship must be done away, before the true can be rightly and acceptably performed; the first Thing they did, being thus met together, was the taking away all the Idolatrous Altars that were in *Jerusalem*, and casting them into the Brook *Kidron*. Which done, and the Priests and the Levites having, for meer shame, sanctified themselves, they killed the Passover on the Fourteenth Day of the Second Month, (observing the right Day, though they could not, for that time, observe the right Month) and brought in the Burnt-offerings into the House of the Lord.

And because many in the Congregation were not sanctified (for a Multitude of the People out of *Ephraim*, *Manasseh*, *Issachar*, and *Zebulun*, had not cleansed themselves, who yet were admitted to eat the Passover, tho' against the Law, *Levit.* 7. 20.) the Levites were charged to kill their

their Passovers for them (which had they been *Clean*, they themselves should have done, *Levit. 1. 5.*) And good King *Hezekiah* (knowing ^{2 Kin. 18.} how much the *inward preparation* of the Heart exceeded the *outward* ^{2 Chr. 30.} *ceremonious cleansing*) offered this *Attoning Prayer* to the Lord for them, saying,

'The good Lord pardon every one, that prepareth his Heart to seek God, even the Lord God of his Fathers; altho' he be not cleansed, according to the Purification of the Sanctuary. And so acceptable to the Lord was this pious Request, that he hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the People.'

The rest of this great Solemnity (the greatest that had been performed in *Jerusalem*, since the time of King *Solomon*) the Reader may see in the remainder of this Chapter, *2 Chron. 30.*

Now when all this was finished, all *Israel*, that were present went out to the Cities of *Judah*, by King *Hezekiah's* Command, and brake the Images in pieces, and cast down the Groves, and threw down the High-places and the Altars out of all *Judah* and *Benjamin*, and out of that part of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* also, which was subject unto *Judah* (of which see *2 Chron. 13. 19.*) until they had destroyed them all.

Nor spared he the *brazen Serpent*, which *Moses* had made by the Command of God, *Numb. 21. 8, 9.* But because the Children of *Israel* had burnt Incense to it, he brake it in pieces; and in contempt, called it, *Nebushtan*, that is, a Piece of meer Brass.

Then, that he might make a thorough Reformation, he regulated the Priests and Levites; with Respect both to their Courses of waiting, and the respective Services they were to perform in the House of the Lord, and about his Worship. And that they might be encouraged in their Attendance, according to the Law of the Lord, he commanded the People to give them their Portion; which thereupon was brought in so plentifully, that they all had enough to eat, and to spare: So that Store-Houses were provided to lay up what was left; and Stewards appointed to take the Charge and Care of Receiving, and Distributing it.

Thus did *Hezekiah* throughout all *Judah*; working that which was good, and right in Truth, before the Lord his God: For in every work that he undertook, in the Service of the House of God, he sought his God, according to the Law and the Commandments; and did it with all his Heart. And indeed, he clave to the Lord, and departed not from following him, but kept his Commandments, trusting in the God of *Israel*: So that after him, was none like him, among all the Kings of *Judah*; nor any that were before him, viz. since the Division of the Kingdom. And the Lord, who is never short on his part, was with him, and prospered him whithersoever he went.

In his Father's time (who, for his own, and his People's Sins, was brought low) the *Philistines* had invaded the Low-Country, and the South of *Judah*; and had taken many Cities, with their Villages, from *Judah*; which they possess'd themselves of, and dwelt in, *2 Chron. 28. 18.* These *Hezekiah* recovered from them, and gave the *Philistines* a full Defeat.

His Father *Abaz* had also, through Fear, subjected himself, and the Kingdom, to the King of *Assyria*, *2 Kings 16. 7.* This being uneasy to *Hezekiah*, he refused to serve the *Assyrian* any longer, and forbore to pay him Tribute. Whereupon, in the Fourteenth Year of *Hezekiah*, *Sennacherib*, then King of *Assyria*, entring with an Army into *Judah*, encamped against the Fenced Cities, and thought to win them. So we read it in *2 Chron. 32. 1.* But in *2 Kings 18. 13.* it is said expressly, that he came up against all the fenced Cities of *Judah*, and took them: With

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which

which agrees the Prophet *Isaiah*, Chap. 36. 1. Yet taking this latter
 2 *Kin.* 18. to be spoken by a *Trope* of the whole for a part, it may be understood
 2 *Chr.* 32. that he, in the *Pride* and *Haughtiness* of his Heart, *thought to have*
won them all: But being restrained, *took only some of them*.

However, *Hezekiah* foreseeing that, after he had taken the *Out-Cities*, he would aim at *Jerusalem*, the Royal Seat of *Judah*, thought fit, while he had time, to make it as strong as he could. Wherefore taking Counsel with his Princes and chief Officers, and setting many Hands to the Work, he caused all the *Fountains* of Water, which were without the City, to be stopped. And cutting off the Brook [*Gihon*] which ran through the middle of the Land, he brought it down to the West side of the City of *David*: That so he might both secure himself of a sufficient Supply of Water, and straiten the Enemy for want of it. Then he repaired the Wall that had been broken down, suppose by *Joash* King of *Israel*, in the time of *Amaziah* King of *Judah*, 2 *Chron.* 25. 23.) and having raised it up to the Towers, he strengthened it with another Wall without. He repaired also the *Fortress* (called *Millo*) in the City of *David*. And having made *Darts* and *Shields* in abundance, he set Captains of War over the People; and causing them to be mustered before him, he spake comfortably to them, bidding them *be strong and Courageous*: And not be afraid, nor dismay'd, because of the King of *Assyria*. For (said he) there are more with us, than with him. *With him, indeed, is an Arm of Flesh: But with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our Battels*.

But altho' the People were somewhat heartened by these encouraging Words: Yet *Hezekiah* considering the Strength of the *Assyrian*, and what he had done already, thought it safer for him to *submit*, and thereby save his Country from Slaughter, Spoil and Rapin; than to *try it out* by the Sword.

Wherefore sending his *Ambassadors* to the *Assyrian* King, who then lay, with all his Forces, before *Lachish* (a City belonging to the Tribe of *Judah*, *Josh.* 15. 39.) he by them acknowledged his *Offence*, intreated him to withdraw his Army, and promised to bear what *Penalty* he would lay upon him.

The *Assyrian* King thereupon appointed him to pay Three Hundred *Talents* of Silver, and Thirty *Talents* of Gold. The Three Hundred *Talents* of Silver, at Three Hundred Seventy Five Pounds each *Talent*, came to One Hundred and Twelve Thousand and Five Hundred Pounds: And the Thirty *Talents* of Gold, at Four Thousand Five Hundred Pounds apiece, came to One Hundred Thirty and Five Thousand Pounds: So that the whole Sum was Two Hundred Forty and Seven Thousand and Five Hundred Pounds.

To pay this *Fine*, *Hezekiah* took all the Silver that was found in the House of the Lord, and in the Treasures of the King's House. And that not sufficing, he was fain to cut off the Gold from the Doors of the Temple of the Lord, and from the Pillars which he had overlaid with Gold: For it seems when he opened the Doors of the Temple (which his Father had shut) and restored the Worship of God, in the beginning of his Reign; he had overlaid the Doors and Pillars with Plates of Gold. But when the *Assyrian* King had gotten the Money, instead of raising the Siege, and withdrawing his Forces, he sent Three of his prime Commanders, (*Tartan*, *Rabsaris*, and *Rabshakeh*) from *Lachish*, with a great Host, against *Jerusalem*; with intent (as is supposed) to place a *Garrison* therein, for the King of *Assyria*.

These coming to *Jerusalem*, and demanding to speak with the King, he sent forth to them Three prime Ministers of State, *Eliakim*, who was
 Comp-

Comptroller, or over the Household, with *Shebna* the Secretary of State, and *Joab* the Recorder. But when, by the coming forth of these, the *Assyrians* perceived that Entrance was denied them; *Rabshakeh*, in the Name of his Master *Sennacherib*, spake thus unto them. ^{2 Kin. 18.}
^{2 Chr. 32.}

‘ Speak ye now (said he) to *Hezekiah*, Thus saith the great King, the King of *Assyria*; What Confidence is this, wherein thou trustest? Thou sayest, I have Counsel and Strength for the War: But they are but vain Words. On whom therefore dost thou rely, that thou rebellest against me? Thou trustest (it may be) upon the Staff of this broken Reed, even *Egypt*; on which if a Man lean, it will go into his Hand, and pierce it: For such is *Pharaoh* King of *Egypt*, unto all that trust in him. But if ye shall say unto me, We trust in the Lord our God; (I answer, What Reason have ye to trust in him whom ye have so openly done despite unto? for) Is not that he, whose High-places and whose Altars *Hezekiah* hath taken away; and hath said to *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, ye shall worship before this (Only) Altar in *Jerusalem*?

Then, to express the highest Contempt of *Hezekiah*’s Strength, and to deride his Weakness, he added, ‘ Now therefore, I pray thee, give Hostages to my Lord the King of *Assyria*; and I will deliver thee Two Thousand Horses, if thou be but able on thy part to set Riders on them. And if thou beest not, how then wilt thou be able to put to Flight one Captain of the least of my Master’s Servants? But besides, ’tis in vain for you to rely upon the Lord: For am I now come up without the Lord against this Place to destroy it? No, no, the Lord said to me. Go up against this Land and destroy it.

Rabshakeh, it seems, delivered his Message in the Jewish Language; and that troubled *Hezekiah*’s Ministers; lest the Jews, that were within hearing, upon the Wall, should be thereby Discouraged. Wherefore they desired *Rabshakeh* to speak to them in the Syrian Language, which they told him they understood; and not talk any longer with them in the Jews Language, in the hearing of the People that were on the Wall.

But *Rabshakeh*, deriding their Fear, thus replied to him that made that Request; ‘ Hath my Master sent me to speak these Words to thy Master and thee only? Hath he not sent me to the Men which sit on the Wall; that they may know before-hand what they must trust to, if they stand out against my Master, to wit, to eat their own Dung, and drink their own Piss? that is, to undergo the utmost Extremities of a close and long Siege.

Then raising his Voice, and directing his Speech to the People on the Wall, he cried in the Jews Language; Hear the Word of the great King, the King of *Assyria*. Upon which the People giving Attention, he went on.

‘ Thus saith the King, Let not *Hezekiah* deceive you: For he shall not be able to deliver you out of my Hand. Neither let *Hezekiah* make you trust in the Lord, saying, The Lord will surely deliver us, and this City shall not be delivered into the Hand of the King of *Assyria*.

‘ Harken not unto *Hezekiah*: For thus saith the King of *Assyria*, make an Agreement with me, by a Present, and come out to me; and then eat ye every Man of his own Vine, and of his own Fig-tree, until I come, and take you away to a Land like your own; a Land of Corn and Wine, a Land of Bread and Vineyards, a Land of Oil of Olive and of Honey, that ye may live, and not die. And hearken not unto *Hezekiah*, when he deceiveth you, saying, The Lord will deliver us. Hath any of the Gods of the Nations delivered at all his

his Land out of the Hand of the King of *Assyria*? Then recounting
 2 *Kin.* 19. ' the Places he had won, he went on, asking? Where are the Gods of
Isa. 37. ' *Hamath*, and of *Arphad*? Where are the Gods of *Sepharvaim*, *Henah*,
 ' and *Ivab*? Have they delivered *Samaria* out of mine Hand? Which
 ' of all the Gods of the Countries, hath delivered their Country out
 ' of my Hand; *that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem* out of my
 ' Hand?

Here *Rabshakeh* stopt: Expecting probably that the People would have expressed their Minds: But the People held their Peace; and answered him not: For the King's Command was, *Answer him not a Word*.

But when *Eliakim*, with the other Two Officers came back to King *Hezekiah* with their Clothes rent, and told him the Words of *Rabshakeh*; the good King, renting his Clothes also, covered himself with Sackcloth, and went into the House of the Lord, to beg Help and Deliverance of him: Sending mean while *Eliakim* and *Shebna*, with the Elders of the Priests, covered also with Sackcloth, to *Isaiah* the Prophet, to stir him up to seek the Lord for them.

These, coming to *Isaiah*, said, Thus saith *Hezekiah*, This is a Day of Trouble, and of Rebuke and Blasphemy (to wit, in *Rabshakeh's* Condemning the taking away the High-places, &c.) For the Children are come to the Birth; and there is not Strength to bring forth (meaning perhaps, to finish the Reformation begun.) It may be the Lord thy God will hear the Words of *Rabshakeh*, whom the King of *Assyria* his Master hath sent to Reproach the living God; and will reprove them. Wherefore lift up thy Prayer for the Remnant that are left; since Ten Tribes of Twelve are already carried away, and so many Cities now taken in *Judah*.

The good Prophet, not dismayed with the *Assyrian* Threats, gave them this short, but comforting Answer.

' Thus shall ye say to your Master; Thus saith the Lord, Be not
 ' afraid of the Words which thou hast heard; with which the Servant
 ' of the King of *Assyria*, hath blasphemed me. Behold, I will send a
 ' Blast (or Spirit) upon him; and he shall hear a Rumour, and shall
 ' return to his own Land; And I will cause him to fall by the Sword in
 ' his own Land.

Mean while *Rabshakeh*, the *Assyrian Herald*, having summoned the City *Jerusalem* to yield, and received no Answer, was returned, to give the King his Master an Account of his Undertaking; and found him Warring against *Libnah* (a City belonging to the Priests, *Josh.* 21. 13. and *1 Chron.* 6. 57. which, in the Reign of *Joram*, Son of *Jehoshaphat* King of *Judah*, had revolted from *Judah*, *2 Kings* 8. 22.) for *Rabshakeh* had heard that *Sennacherib* was departed from *Lachish*.

At *Libnah* it was that *Sennacherib* heard the Rumour (which God by the Prophet had said he should hear;) which was, That his own Country was Invaded by *Tirhakah*, King of *Ethiopia*, who was come out to fight against him. Wherefore resolving to return home with all speed, to defend his own Land (which the Blast, or Spirit that God sent upon him, disposed him to) he sent Messengers again unto King *Hezekiah*, with a Second Summons, in these haughty Terms.

' Let not thy God, in whom thou trustest, deceive thee, by telling
 ' thee *Jerusalem* shall not be delivered into the hand of the King of
 ' *Assyria*. Behold, thou hast heard what the Kings of *Assyria* have
 ' done unto all Lands, by destroying them utterly: And shalt thou be
 ' delivered? Have the Gods of the Nations delivered them which my
 ' Fathers have destroyed; as *Gozan*, and *Haran*, and *Kezeph*, and the
 ' Chil-

‘ Children of *Eden*, which were in *Thelazar*? Where is the King of
 ‘ *Hamath*, and the King of *Arphan*, and the King of the City of *Se-* ^{2 Kin. 19.}
 ‘ *pharvaim*, of *Henah*, and of *Ivab*? ^{Isa. 37.}

The former Summons was delivered by word of Mouth: But this was sent, by a Messenger in a Letter, Which when King *Hezekiah* had received and read, he went up into the House of the Lord; and having spread it before the Lord, he poured forth his Supplication before the Lord, in these Words.

‘ O Lord God of *Israel*, who dwellest between the *Cherubims*; Thou
 ‘ art the God, *even thou alone*, of all the Kingdoms of the Earth:
 ‘ For thou hast made both Heaven and Earth. Bow down, O Lord,
 ‘ thine Ear, and hear; open thine Eyes, O Lord, and see: And hear all
 ‘ the Words of *Sennacherib*, who hath sent to *Reproach the living*
 ‘ *God*. True it is, O Lord, that the Kings of *Assyria* have destroyed
 ‘ the Nations and their Lands; and have *cast their Gods into the Fire*:
 ‘ For they were *no Gods*, but Wood and Stone, the Work of Men’s
 ‘ Hands; *therefore they have destroyed them*. Now therefore, O Lord
 ‘ our God, I beseech thee save thou us out of his Hand; that all the
 ‘ Kingdoms of the Earth may know, that thou art the Lord God, *even*
 ‘ *thou only*.

To this fervent Prayer, the Lord vouchsafed to return a verbal Answer, by his Prophet *Isaiah*; who sending to *Hezekiah*, said;

‘ Thus saith the Lord God of *Israel*. That which thou hast prayed
 ‘ to me against *Sennacherib*, King of *Assyria*, I have heard: And this
 ‘ is the Word, which the Lord hath spoken concerning him. *The Vir-*
 ‘ *gin, the Daughter of Zion, hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn:*
 ‘ *The Daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her Head at thee. Whom hast*
 ‘ *thou Reproached, and Blasphemed?* And against whom hast thou ex-
 ‘ *alted thy Voice?* And lifted up thine Eyes on high? *Even against the*
 ‘ *Holy one of Israel*. Then Rhetorically exaggerating his haughty
 ‘ Threats, he goes on; *By thy Messengers thou hast Reproached the Lord,*
 ‘ and hast said, *With the multitude of my Chariots I am come up to the*
 ‘ *height of the Mountains, to the sides of Lebanon; and will cut down*
 ‘ *the tall Cedar-Trees thereof, and the choice Fir-Trees thereof, and will*
 ‘ *enter into the Lodgings of his Borders, and into the Forest, and his*
 ‘ *fruitful Country. I have digged, and drunk strange Waters; and with*
 ‘ *the sole of my Feet have I dried up all the Rivers of besieged Places.*
 Then, to take down his Pride, and let him see he had arrogated to himself what was due to the Lord, whose Instrument only he was, the Prophet thus interrogates him. ‘ *Hast thou not heard, that I have done*
 ‘ *it long ago? And that of ancient times I have formed it? Now have I*
 ‘ *brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced Cities into*
 ‘ *ruinous Heaps.* And to shew that he had not prevailed so much by his own Strength, as by God’s having weakened them whom he subdued, the Prophet adds; *Therefore their Inhabitants were of small*
 ‘ *Power, they were dismayed and confounded, they were as the Grass of*
 ‘ *the Field, and as the green Herb, as the Grass on the House Top, and*
 ‘ *as Corn that is blasted before it be grown up. But I know thy Abode,*
 ‘ *thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy Rage against me. Because*
 ‘ *thy Rage against me, and thy Tumult is come up into mine Ears:*
 ‘ *Therefore will I put my Hook in thy Nose, and my Bridle in thy Lips;*
 ‘ *and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.* Then giving *Hezekiah* a Sign, to confirm the certainty of his Deliverance, the Prophet concludes after this manner; *Therefore thus saith the Lord con-*
 ‘ *cerning the King of Assyria, He shall not come into this City, nor shoot*
 ‘ *an Arrow there: Nor come before it with Shield, nor cast a Bank against*

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it. By the way that he came shall he return, and shall not come into this City, saith the Lord: For I will defend this City, to save it, for mine own sake, and for the sake of my Servant David.

But the Deliverance was quicker than the Sign. For in that very Night, the Angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the Camp of the Assyrians, an Hundred Fourscore and Five Thousand: Amongst which were all the mighty Men of Valour, and the Leaders and Captains in the Camp of the King of Assyria; so that in the Morning, Behold, *they were all dead Corpses.*

Thus this haughty King, with shame of Face, returned into his own Country, and dwelt at Nineveh: Whither Divine Vengeance followed him. For not long after, as he was worshipping in the House of Nisroch his God (which some take to be the Figure of Noah's Ark; others, the Image of an Eagle :) His Two Sons, Adrammelech and Sharezer, smote him with the Sword; and escaping into the Land of Armenia, made way for Esar-baddon, another of his Sons, to ascend the Assyrian Throne.

The occasion of this Regi-parricide, not touched in the Sacred Text, is in other Story, thus delivered.

When Sennacherib was got home, with the loss of so great an Army, he demanded of some about him, what the Reason might be, that the *unresistable* God of Heaven so favoured the Jewish Nation. To which he was answered, That Abraham, from whom they descended, by sacrificing to him his only Son, had purchased this Protection to his Progeny. Whereupon the King Replied, *If that will win him, I'll spare him Two of my Sons, to gain him to my side.* Which when his Sons Sharezer and Adrammelech heard, they resolved to prevent their own Deaths by his. See Prideaux's Introduction to reading History, p. 164.

To these times may be referr'd those Prophecies of *Isaiah*, which are contained in Chap. 10. and in Chap. 14. 25. and 30. 31. and 31. 8. And that of the Prophet *Micah*, Chap. 5. 6.

Thus the Lord saved Hezekiah, and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, from the Hand of Sennacherib King of Assyria, and from all others; and both guided and guarded them on every side. And so evident it was, that this Deliverance was wrought by the immediate Hand of God; that many thereupon brought Gifts unto the Lord at Jerusalem, and Presents also to King Hezekiah: So that he was magnified in the sight of all Nations from thenceforward. And indeed, he had exceeding much Riches and Honour; so that he made himself Treasuries for Silver, and for Gold, and for precious Stones, and all manner of pleasant Jewels; An Armory also, for warlike Weapons; and Store-houses to receive the Increase of Corn, Wine and Oil; Stalls also for all manner of greater Cattel: And Cotes (or Folds) for Flocks: For he had very great Possessions of Flocks and Herds; God having given him Substance in abundance.

But in the midst of all this Affluence of Riches and Honour, it pleased God to visit him with a mortal Sickness; and at the same time to send his Prophet *Isaiah* to him, to bid him set his House in order, (and settle his Affairs.) *For he should die.*

When Hezekiah had received this sorrowful Message, he turned his Face towards the Wall (that outward Objects might not distract his Thoughts;) and pouring forth his Soul in Prayer to the Lord, he said, *Remember me, O Lord, I beseech thee; how I have walked before thee in Truth, and with a perfect Heart: And have done that which is good in thy Sight.*

This short Prayer, poured forth with plenty of Tears, proved so effectual with his gracious God; that before *Isaiah* (who, as soon as he had delivered his Message, departed) was gone out into the middle Court

Court of the King's House: The Word of the Lord came to him again, saying, *Turn again, and tell Hezekiah, the Captain of my People; thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy Father, I have heard thy Prayer, I have seen thy Tears: Behold I will heal thee, so that on the Third Day thou shalt go up unto the House of the Lord.* Nor only so: But I will add unto thy Days Fifteen Years. And I will deliver thee, and this City, out of the Hand of the King of Assyria (if he should hereafter attempt any thing against thee, or it:) And I will defend this City for mine own sake, and for the sake of my Servant David.

This sudden Return of the Prophet, with a Message so directly contrary to the former, made Hezekiah take the boldness, to ask the Prophet, *What the Sign should be*, that the Lord would heal him, and that he should go up into the House of the Lord on the Third Day. To which the Prophet answered, that the Sign which the Lord would give, to assure him that he would perform what he had spoken, should be at his own choice; whether to have the Shadow go Ten Degrees forward, or as many backward, on the Sun-dial.

Hezekiah thinking it less marvellous, for the Shadow to go down Ten Degrees, chose to have the Shadow return back Ten Degrees. Whereupon the good Prophet Isaiah crying to the Lord, to give this confirming Sign to the sick King; he brought the Shadow Ten Degrees backward, by which it had gone down on the Sun-dial, which King Ahas had caused to be made. And the Prophet then ordering a Lump of Figs to be laid on the King's Sore, he recovered.

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3295.

As soon as he was recovered, he committed to Writing this Memorial of his Affliction and Sorrow; and of his thankful Acknowledgment to the Lord for his Recovery.

' I said, in the cutting off of my Days, I shall go to the Gates of the Grave: I am deprived of the Residue of my Years. I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the Land of the Living: I shall behold Man no more, with the Inhabitants of the World. Mine Age is departed, and is removed from me, as a Shepherd's Tent: I have cut off, like a Weaver, my Life. He will cut me off with pining Sickness: From Day even to Night wilt thou make an end of me. Like a Crane, or a Swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn, as a Dove. Mine Eyes failed with looking upward; (which is the Posture of Suppliants.) ' O Lord, I am oppressed; ease thou me. What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me; and himself hath done it. I shall go softly all my Years, in the Bitterness of my Soul. O Lord, by these things Men live; and in all these Things is the Life of my Spirit: So wilt thou recover me and make me to live. Behold, for Peace I had great Bitterness; but thou hast, in love to my Soul, delivered it from the Pit of Corruption: For thou hast cast all my Sins behind thy back. For the Grave cannot praise thee; Death cannot celebrate thee: They that go down into the Pit cannot hope for thy Truth. The Living, the Living, he shall praise thee; us I do this Day: The Father to the Children shall make known thy Truth. The Lord was ready to save me: Therefore we will sing my Songs to the stringed Instruments, all the Days of our Life, in the House of the Lord.

The Fame of this so great a Miracle (of the Sun's altering his Course, and going backward) being spread far abroad, came to the Ear of Merodach-Baladan, the Son of Baladan King of Babylon; who thereupon sent Ambassadors, with a Present to King Hezekiah; both to congratulate his Recovery (for he had heard that he had been sick;) and to enquire more particularly about that great Wonder. And now, for a further Trial, that Hezekiah might see, and be made yet more sensible of his own Weakness;

2 Kin. 20.
Isaiah 39.

Weakness; God left him to act according to his own Affections. To that purpose we read, in 2 Chron. 32. 31.

2 Kin. 20.
Isa. 39.

He, thus left to the *Conduct* of his own *Discretion*, thought he could not entertain the *Babylonish Ambassadors* more honourably, or with greater Demonstration of hearty Kindness and Respect to their Master, than by shewing them the *Glory* and *Strength* of his House and Kingdom. Wherefore leading them to the Store-houses of his most precious Things, he shewed them the Silver, the Gold, the Jewels, the Spicery and the precious Ointments: His Armory also, and all his Treasures; there was nothing remarkable in his House or in all his Dominion, that he shewed them not.

When he had done thus, the Prophet *Isaiah* came to him, and asked him whence those *Ambassadors* came, and what they came about. And the King telling him they came from *Babylon*: What, said the Prophet, have they seen in thy House? Truly all, replied the King, that was to be seen in my House, they have seen: For there is nothing among my Treasures that I have not shewed them. Then hear the Word of the Lord, said the Prophet, Behold, the Days shall come, that all that is in thine House, and that which thy Fathers have laid up in store unto this Day, shall be carried into *Babylon*: Nothing thereof shall be left, saith the Lord. And of thy Sons which thou shalt beget, shall they take away, and they shall be *Eunuchs* in the Palace of the King of *Babylon*.

The good King, who had erred through *humane Weakness*, not stubborn *Willfulness*, humbly bowing to the Judgment, replied. Good is the Word of the Lord, which thou hast spoken: especially, seeing there shall be Peace and Truth in my Days. This is that which is hinted at, in 2 Chron. 32. 26. where we read, that *Hezekiah* humbled himself for the *Pride* of his Heart, &c. Which shews he had some *Ospretation*, or *Vain-glory* in shewing his Treasures.

2 Kin. 20.
2 Chr. 32.

We now draw near to his End. And as he was, perhaps, the only Man in Story, that had a *Lease* of his Life: So this Business of his too much Openness to the *Babylonian Ambassadors*, happening about the Beginning of those Fifteen Years, which the Lord (his not Landlord only, but *Life-Lord*) had granted him; it is not to be doubted, but that he did many things in the remaining part of that Term, for the Honour of God, and the Good of his People, more than are recorded in the Books which we have. But the unhappy Loss of that Book of the *Chronicles* of the Kings of *Judah* (to which we are here referred for a further Account of his Acts) having deprived us of the *Memoirs* of the latter part of his Life, we must close his Story with this short Account: That he made a Pool, and a Conduit, and brought Water into the City. And that when the Term assigned him was expired, he slept with his Fathers, and was buried in the chiefest of the Sepulchres of the Sons of *David*; and that all *Judah*, and the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, did him Honour at his Death.

Isaiah 22.

We read of two great Ministers of State under this King *Hezekiah*, *Eliakim*, and *Shebna*; who were sent forth to receive the King of *Assyria*'s Message by *Rabshakeh*, and afterwards to consult the Prophet *Isaiah* about it, 2 Kings 18. 17, 18. and ch. 19. 2. The Former of these was doubtless a very good Man, but the latter was stark naught. So that the Prophet *Isaiah* was sent by the Lord, not only to reprove him, but to denounce sore Judgments against him. The Prophet therefore, in the Name of the Lord, told him; that he would not only throw him out of his Offices (the Places of Honour and Profit he had got,) and place *Eliakim* in them: But he would Carry him away also into Captivity; and would violently turn and toss him, like a Bull, into a large Country, where

where he should die. And he would give his Office to *Eliakim* (whom he, it seems, had supplanted, and had gotten from him the Office of *Treasurer*) and would make *Eliakim* a Father to the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, and to the House of *Judah*.

Unlike to *Hezekiah* was his Son and Successor *Manasseh*: Who at Twelve Years old came to the Crown, and Reigned (first and last) Five and Fifty Years in *Jerusalem*. For he did that which was Evil in the sight of the Lord, like unto the Abominations of the Heathen, whom the Lord had cast out before the Children of *Israel*. He built again the High-places, which his Father *Hezekiah* had broken down; and he reared up Altars for *Baalim*, and made Groves (as *Ahab* King of *Israel* had done) and worshipped all the Host of Heaven, and served them; and built Altars, not only in the two Courts of the House of the Lord, but in the House of the Lord also.

And he set a Carved Image (an Idol of his own making) in the House of God. He also caused his Children to pass through the Fire, in the Valley of the Son of *Hinnom*. And he observed Times, and used Incantments, and practised Witchcraft, and dealt with Familiar Spirits, and with Wizards. And besides all this, he shed innocent Blood in such abundance, that he is said to have filled *Jerusalem* therewith, from one end to the other.

Amongst the rest, that helped to make up that purple Stream, it is more than probable, the innocent Blood of that right Noble, and truly Evangelical Prophet *Isaiah*, was spilt. For tho' the holy Text gives no Account of his Death, yet Ecclesiastical Writers deliver, that under this King *Manasseh* (who is reputed to have been his Son-in-law) he was in his extreme Age, after he had lived more than an Hundred Years, and prophesied more than Sixty of them, most barbarously Martyr'd by being sawed in two. To which, not improbably, the Author to the *Hebrews* might refer, when he said, *They were sawed asunder*, Heb. 11. 37.

So far did this *Manasseh*, by these his horrible Impieties provoke the Lord to Anger, that the Lord sent his Prophet to him, with this Message. 'Because *Manasseh* King of *Judah* hath done these Abominations; and hath done wickedly above all that the *Amorites* did, which were before him, and hath made *Judah* also to sin with his Idols: Therefore thus saith the Lord God of *Israel*, I am about to bring such Calamities upon *Jerusalem* and *Judah*; that whosoever shall hear of it, both his Ears shall tingle. For I will stretch over *Jerusalem* the Line of *Samaria* (that is, deliver her up to Captivity, as I did *Samaria*) and the Plummets of the House of *Ahab* (which was a total Destruction.) And I will wipe *Jerusalem*, as a Man wipeth a Dish, turning it upside down. And I will forsake the Remnant of mine Inheritance, and deliver them into the Hand of their Enemies; and they shall become a Prey, and a Spoil to all their Enemies.

These dreadful Denunciations of Judgment not working the desired Effect, because both King and People turned the deaf Ear; the Lord let loose the *Assyrian* upon them: Nay it is said, he brought upon them the Captains of the Host of *Assyria*, and they taking *Manasseh* among the Thorns (where, poor guilty Man, he thought to hide himself,) bound him with Fetters, and carried him to *Babylon*.

Being now in *Babylon*, a Captive, and in Fetters, he had time to consider what he had done, and whom he had so audaciously sinned against. And now, bowed by Affliction, he besought the Lord his God; and humbling himself greatly before the God of his Fathers, he prayed unto him. And the Lord was intreated of him, and brought him again to *Jerusalem*, and restored him to his Kingdom: And then *Manasseh* acknowledged that the Lord was God.

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He who lifts to read the *Prayer of Manasseh*, which he made when ^{2 Kin. 21.} he was bound in *Babylon*, may find that which bears his Name, in the ^{2 Chr. 33.} *Apocrypha*, between the Story of *Bel* and the *Dragon*, and the First Book of the *Maccabees*. But in that which is called the *Bishop's Bible*, it is placed (I know not why) between the Second Book of *Chronicles*, and the Book of *Ezra*.

To manifest the Sincerity of his Repentance by *Deeds*, as well as by *Words*, *Manasseh*, after his Return from his *Babylonish* Captivity, took away the *strange Gods*, and the *Idol* out of the House of the Lord, together with all the *Altars* which he had built in the Mount of the House of the Lord, and in *Jerusalem*, and cast them out of the City. And then repairing the Altar of the Lord, sacrificed thereon *Burnt-offerings*, and *Thanks-offerings*; and commanded *Judah* to serve the Lord God of *Israel*. Nevertheless the People did sacrifice still in the High-places, yet unto the Lord their God only: So that they did not now sacrifice *directly to Idols*; but to God, in the *Idols Places*.

And as he made this *Reformation* in Religion; so for the greater Security of his Kingdom, he not only put Captains of War in all the fenced Cities of *Judah*; but built a Wall (or perhaps carried on rather and finished, or repaired that *Out-Wall*, which his Father *Hezekiah* had begun, 2 *Chron.* 32. 5.) without the City of *David*, on the West-side of *Ghion*, in the Valley, even to the Entering in at the *Fish-Gate*; and compassed the Tower (called *Ophel*) about, having raised it up to a very great Height.

But having fallen so foully as he had done, tho' he was restored in a good Degree, yet I observe, that when he died, he was not buried (as his Father was, and as the good Kings were) in the *Royal Sepulchres*; but he was buried in the Garden of his own House, called the Garden of *Uzzah*.

His Son *Amon*, who succeeded him, had great Advantages over his Father *Manasseh*, to have done well. For tho' *Manasseh* sprang from an excellent Father, whose Example was enough to instruct a Son, yet he being but a Child when his Father died (of but Twelve Years of Age when he came to the Crown) was the more liable to be corrupted, and misled. Whereas *Amon* was Two and Twenty Years old, when he began to Reign; and had his Father's Misery for a Warning to him. The *Iron Fetters*, which his Father wore in *Babylon*, might have deterred him (one would think) from running that Course which had brought his Father to them, but it did not. For he did Evil in the sight of the Lord, as his Father *Manasseh* had done; and forsaking the Lord God of his Fathers, he walked not in the Way of the Lord, but following his Father's Steps, served the *Idols* that his Father served, and worshipped them; Sacrificing unto all the *Carved Images* which his Father had made. Thus he followed the worst part of his Father's Life, but not the best: For he did not humble himself before the Lord, as *Manasseh* his Father had humbled himself; but he trespassed more and more. Wherefore the Lord suffered his Servants to Conspire against him, and they slew him in his own House, after he had reigned Two Years.

His Death, as bad as he was, was revenged upon his Murderers. For the People of the Land slew all them that had conspired against him; and then took his Son *Josiah*, a Child of Eight Years old, and made him King in his Father's stead.

This was that King, who was Prophefied of by Name above Three Hundred Years before he was born, 1 *Kings* 13. 2. Him therefore the Lord having especial Regard unto, so seasoned with Divine Graces in his Child-

Childhood; that while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his Father; and did that which was Right in the sight of the Lord, walking in all the good Ways of David, without declining to the right Hand, or to the left.

^{2 Kin. 22.}
^{2 Chr. 34.}
A. M.
3367.

In the Twelfth Year of his Reign (which was the Twentieth of his Age) he began the Reformation in Judah; Commanding Hilkiab the High-Priest, with others of the Priests and Door-keepers, to bring forth out of the Temple of the Lord, all the Vessels that had been made for Baal, and for the Grove, and for all the Host of Heaven; which he burnt without Jerusalem, in the Fields of Kidron, and carried the Ashes of them unto Beth-el (a City in the Tribe of Benjamin, which upon the Division of the Kingdom belonged to Israel; but was afterwards taken from Jeroboam the Second, by Abijah King of Judah, 2 Chron. 13. 19.) And because that had been a chief Place of Idolatry, where Jeroboam the Son of Nebat had set up one of his Calf-Idols, Josiah sent the Ashes of these Idolatrous things thither, to express his Contempt of that Place.

The Idolatrous Priests, which the Kings of Judah had ordained to burn Incense in the High-places, in the Cities of Judah, and in the parts round about Jerusalem, he put down; with them also that burned Incense unto Baal, to the Sun, and to the Moon, to the Planets, and all the Host of Heaven. Which Priests, Tremellius and Junius called *Atratos*, Black-coats, because they were, *Pullis Vestibus indutos, ex superstitioso ritu*; that is, Cloathed with black Garments, out of a superstitious Rite. Annot. on 2 Kings 23. 5. The Bishop's Bible calls them *Chemarims*, both here, and in Hosea 10. 5. and in the Marginal Note, gives this as the Reason of their being so called, that they did wear Black Apparel.

The good King going on with his Reformation, not only brought forth the Grove (which some take to be an Idol, having the Resemblance of a Grove Carved upon it) from the House of the Lord, unto the Brook Kidron, without Jerusalem; and burning it there, stamp it to small Powder, and cast the Powder thereof upon the Graves of them that had sacrificed thereunto; but brake down also the Houses of the Sodomites, that were in the House of the Lord, where the Women wove Hangings for the Grove.

He took away the Horses, that the Kings of Judah had given to the Sun; and burnt the Chariots of the Sun with Fire.

The Altars also, that were on the top of the Upper Chamber of Abaz, which the Kings of Judah had made for the Worship of the Host of Heaven (described by the Prophets, Jeremiah, ch. 19. 13. and Zephaniah, ch. 1. 5.) and the Altars which Manasseh had made in the two Courts of the House of the Lord, did the King beat down; and breaking them into Pieces, cast the Dust of them into the Brook Kidron.

The High-places, which were before Jerusalem, on the right hand of that noted Mount (which, from the Fruit it bore, was usually called the Mount of Olives; but from the many filthy Idols that were set up in it, is here, in Contempt, called the Mount of Corruption :) which High-places King Solomon had long before built for Ashteroth, the Abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh, the Abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom, the Abomination of the Ammonites; these did the King defile. And breaking in pieces the Images of all sorts, and cutting down the Groves, he filled their Places with the Bones of Men. Topheth also, which is in the Valley of the Children of Hinnom, he defiled; that no Man might thenceforth make his Son or Daughter pass through the Fire to Moloch. All which Particulars are here enumerated,

ed, that the Reader may see to what an *Height of Impiety* God's own
2 Kin. 23. Peculiar People, the Off-spring of Faithful Abraham, of Humble Isaac,
2 Chr. 34. and of Plain Jacob, were then got.

When thus this Zealous King had *cleansed Jerusalem*, he went forth to the Cities of *Judah*, and of *Manasseh*, *Ephraim* and *Simeon*, even unto *Naphtali*; and having brought all the *Idolatrous Priests* out of the Cities of *Judah*, he *defiled the High-places* where the Priests had burnt Incense, and *brake them down*, both publick and private, from one side of *Judah* to the other.

But when he was come to *Beth-el*, where *Nebar's Son* had set up his *golden Calf*; he *brake down* both the *Altar* and the *High-place*, and *stamp't them to Powder*, and *burnt the Grove*. And as he turned himself about, espying the *Sepulchres* that were there, in the Mount, he sent and took the *Bones* out of them, and burning them upon the Altar, *polluted it*, according to the Word of the Lord, which the Man of God had proclaimed against it, more than Three Hundred Years before.

Then observing an *Inscription* upon a *Tomb*, he asked, What Title is that which I see? And the Men of the City telling him, It was the *Sepulchre* of the *Man of God*, who came from *Judah*, and proclaimed against the *Altar of Beth-el*, the things which he had now done to it: *O let him alone*, said the King; *Let no Man move his Bones*. So they let his Bones rest, with the Bones of the *old Propet*, that had mis-led him to his Destruction, (and who was buried in the same Grave with him, *1 Kings 13. 31.*) who is here said to have come out of *Samaria*, *2 Kings 23. 18.* but there, to have dwelt in *Beth-el*, *1 Kings 13. 11.*

Nor did *Josiah* thus at *Beth-el* only: But in all the Cities of *Samaria* (that is, of *Israel*, whereof *Samaria* was the chief) which were then subject to the Kings of *Judah*, he took away all the Houses of the High-places, which the Kings of *Israel* had made to provoke the Lord to Anger; and did to them, as he had done at *Beth-el*.

As for the *Priests*, those of them that were of the *Levitical Order*, and had *defiled* themselves with the Idols, he *removed* from their *Sacerdotal Function*; not admitting them to come to minister at the Altar of the Lord at *Jerusalem*: Yet permitting them to eat of the unleavened Bread among their Brethren.

But as for the *other Priests* who were Priests of the High-places (such as they whom *Jeroboam*, and other *Idolatrous Kings* of *Israel* and *Judah*, had made and set up) he *sacrificed them* on their Altars, and *burnt their Bones* upon them.

But tho' the King himself was thus *zealously affected*, for carrying on the Work of Reformation: Yet the Generality of the People seem to have come but *unwillingly* to it. So that he was fain to use his Kingly
Jeremiah. Authority, to restrain them from Idolatry. And the Prophet *Jeremiah*; who entred upon his Prophetick Function much about this time (*viz.* In the Thirteenth Year of this King, *Fer. 1. 2.*) complained much of them in his 2, 3, and 4th Chapters.

The King's next Care was for *Repairing the Temple*. Wherefore being returned, from his *Visitation-Progress*, to *Jerusalem*, in the Eighteenth Year of his Reign, he sent his *Chancellor Shaphan*, with *Maasiah* the Governour of the City, and *Joab* the Recorder, to *Hilkiah* the High-Priest, with order to cast up the Money that had been brought into the House of the Lord, by the Offerings of the People. And to deliver it to the *Surveyors* of the Work: that they might pay it to the Workmen, for *Materials* and *Workmanship*, in repairing the Breaches of the House of the Lord.

While

While they were looking up the Money, *Hilkiah found the Book of the Law* given by *Moses* (supposed by some to be the very *Autograph*, or *2 Kin. 23.* first Draught, written by *Moses* his own Hand :) Which he gave to *Shaphan*, to deliver to the King.

How long this Book had lain hid, is uncertain. The last Mention I find of it, was in *Jehoshaphat's* Time ; more than Two Hundred Years before : But the finding it now was of great Service. For when *Shaphan* brought it to the King, and read in it before him ; the King observing what *Judgments* were therein threatned to all them, that should break the Law therein contained : And considering how short his Ancestors and his People had been of keeping them, commanded *Hilkiah* the Priest, with divers of the King's principal Servants, to go and enquire of the Lord for him, and for them that were left in *Israel* and *Judah*, concerning the Words of that Book ; fearing the Wrath of God would be poured out upon them, because their Fathers had not kept the Word of the Lord, to do after all that was written in that Book.

Hilkiah thereupon, and the rest whom the King had appointed to go with him, went to *Huldah the Prophetess*, the Wife of *Shallum*, Keeper of the Wardrobe, who dwelt in the College in *Jerusalem*.

This affords an *Observation*, not unfit to be considered, namely, That these great Ministers, and the *High-Priest himself*, should chuse to go, on so solemn an Occasion, and on so important a Business, and that too from the King, to learn the Mind of the Lord from a Woman, a *Prophetess* : When, besides what other Prophets there might then be (for *Zephaniah* prophesied in the Days of this King, and there are *Prophets* mentioned, with the *Priests* and the People, when the Book of the Covenant was read, *2 Kings 23. 2.*) that eminent both Priest and Prophet *Jeremiah* (who by this time had been exercised in the Prophetick Office between Four and Five Years) living but at *Anathoth*, about Three Miles from *Jerusalem*, must needs be well known, and conversant there. Yet so it was ; that to a Woman they went, to enquire of the Lord for both King and People.

And having imparted their Business to her, they received from her this Answer.

' Thus saith the Lord God of *Israel*, Tell ye the Man that sent you to me (to wit, the King of *Judah*) Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring Evil upon this Place, and upon the Inhabitants thereof ; even all the Curses which they have read in the Book before the King of *Judah*. Because they have forsaken me, and have burned Incense unto other Gods ; that they might provoke me to Anger, by all the Works of their Hands : Therefore my Wrath shall be poured out upon this Place, and shall not be quenched.

' But as for the King of *Judah*, who sent you to enquire of the Lord, so shall ye say unto him. Thus saith the Lord God of *Israel* concerning the Words which thou hast read. Because thy Heart was tender, and thou didst humble thy self before God, when thou heardst his Words against this Place, and against the Inhabitants thereof ; and in token of thy humbling thy self, didst rend thy Clothes, and weep before me : I have even heard thee also, saith the Lord, Behold, I will gather thee to thy Fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy Grave in Peace : Neither shall thine Eyes see all the Evil that I will bring upon this Place, and upon the Inhabitants thereof.

When they had reported this Answer to the King, he, having sent and gathered together all the Elders of *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, went up into the House of the Lord, and the Men of *Judah*, and the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem* with him ; the Priests also, and Prophets, and all the People,

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ple, both small and great: And there the King read, in their hearing, all
 2 Kin. 23. the Words of the Book of the Covenant, which was found in the House of
 2 Chr. 35. the Lord. Which done, the King, standing in his Place, at a Pillar,
 made a Covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep
 his Commandments, his Testimonies and his Statutes, with all his
 Heart, and with all his Soul; to perform the Words of the Covenant,
 which were written in that Book: And he engaged all the People also,
 that were present, to stand to that Covenant.

The same Year (being the Eighteenth of his Reign) King *Josiah*
 kept the *Passover* unto the Lord in *Jerusalem*; the particular Account
 and Description whereof, the inquisitive Reader may find in 2 *Chron.* 35.
 from ver. 1. to 18. Where this general Account is given of it, That nei-
 ther did all, or any of the Kings of *Israel* (or of *Judah*) keep such a
Passover as this which *Josiah* kept; nor was any *Passover* like to that
 kept in *Israel*, from the Days of *Samuel* the Prophet.

From this Eighteenth Year of his Reign, to the One and Thirtieth,
 (which was his *last*) I find no particular Account of his Acts; unless
 some parts of the *Reformation* which he wrought, should be referred
 to this latter time of his Age, after he had received the Book of the
 Law. For in 2 *Kings* 23. 24. His putting down the *workers with fa-*
miliar Spirits, and the *Wizards*, the *Teraphim*, and the *Idols*, &c. is said
 to be done, that he might perform the Words of the Law, written
 in the Book which *Hilkiah* the Priest found in the House of the Lord.
 But probably much of that time might be spent in *repairing*, and
adorning the Temple. For immediately after the Account of this fa-
 mous *Passover*, it follows in the Text (2 *Chron.* 35. 20.) After all this,
 when *Josiah* had prepared the Temple, *Necho* King of *Egypt* came up, &c.

This coming up of the *Egyptian* King, was to fight against *Carche-*
mish (a Place then belonging to the King of *Assyria*) not far from the
 River *Euphrates*. And *Josiah*, probably at first not understanding his
 intent in this Expedition; but suspecting he had a Design upon him,
 went forth against him. But when *Pharaoh-Necho* understood that *Jo-*
siah had taken the Field, he sent Ambassadors to him, who in his Name
 should say to him, *What have I to do with thee, thou King of Judah?*
I come not against thee this Day; but against the House of Assyria,
 (2 *Kings* 23. 29.) *Wherewith I have War: For God commanded me to*
make haste. Forbear therefore to resist God, who is with me, lest he de-
stroy thee.

The *Annotators* on the Bible tell us, in their *Marginal Note*, on
 2 *Kings* 23. 29. that *Pharaoh* being to pass with his Army through King
Josiah's Country, he feared he would have done him harm; and therefore
 would have stayed him. It seems he was not willing to trust the *Egyptian*
 King with an Army in his Country.

However it was, *Josiah* having advanced with his Army so far, would
 not turn his Back upon him, nor take his Word; which it seems (tho'
 he did not then know so much) came from the Lord. But *disguising*
himself, that he might not be made the *Common Mark*, he went down to
 fight with him in the Valley of *Megiddo*, which belonged to *Manasseh*.
 But notwithstanding his Disguise, the *Egyptian Archers* found him out,
 and gave him a mortal Shot. Whereupon the King said to his Ser-
 vants, *Have me away, for I am sore wounded.*

His Servants thereupon shifting him from that Chariot into the next,
 brought him to *Jerusalem*; and he died and was buried in one of the
 Sepulchres of his Fathers: And all *Judah* and *Jerusalem* mourned for
 him.

But

But none did more lament the untimely Loss of this *good King*, than that *good Man*, the Prophet *Jeremiah*: Who thereupon (tho' some time after, and probably at several times) composed that *Threnody*, or mournful Song, which bears the Title of *The Lamentations of Jeremiah*. 2 Kin. 23.
2 Chr. 35.

Therein he sets forth the manifold *Transgressions*, which his People had run into; and *mournfully bewails* their *deplorable Condition*, from the *extream Miseries* which he foresaw would come, and afterwards saw did come upon them, after the Death of *Josiah*.

So great was the Love, that the People of *Judah* bare to this King, that the *Singing-Men*, and *Singing-Women*, upon *Luctiferous* Occasions, in after-times, were enjoined to Commemorate, in their Lamentations, the *untimely* Death of this *excellent* King.

And so great was the Sorrow they expressed for his Death, that the Prophet *Zechariah* above an Hundred Years after, remembered it; and compared the *Mourning*, which he then Prophesied should in after-times be in *Jerusalem*, to the *Mourning* of *Hadadrimmon* (the Place where *Josiah* received his mortal Wound) in the Valley of *Megiddon*, *Zach.* 12. 11.

Nor was the Love of the People ill-placed on so excellent a King. For, besides the particular *Instances* before related of his *Piety* and *Vertues*, this general *Elogy* is given of him, *That like unto him there was no King before him, that turned to the Lord with all his Heart, and with all his Soul, and with all his Might, according to all the Law of Moses: Neither after him arose there any like him.* Unhappy, perhaps, in this only, that by this *unadvised* and wilful Act of his, in going to fight with the King of *Egypt* without Cause, he both *shortened* his own Life, and deprived himself of the Benefit of that part of the Divine Promise, that he should be gathered to his Grave *in peace*, *2 Chron.* 34. 28.

But altho' this King had been so eminently good, and had done so much for the Reclaiming of his People, and appeasing the Anger of the Lord; yet the Lord turned not from the *Fierceness* of his great Wrath, wherewith his Anger was kindled against *Judah*, because of all the *Provocations* which *Manasseh* had given him. But the Lord said, I will remove *Judah* out of my Sight, as I have removed *Israel* (who was gone into *Captivity* already:) And I will cast off this City *Jerusalem*, which I have chosen; and the House of which I said, My Name shall be there.

Hence it is that the Prophets of that time complained so grievously of the People, and denounced the Judgments of the Lord against them; even to the *Destruction* of their City, and their own *Captivity*: As did *Jeremiah* in the 4, 5, 6. 14, 15, 16. 19. and 20th Chapters of his Prophecy; and the Prophet *Zephaniah* in his. With whom may be joined the Prophet *Habakkuk*: Who is thought to have lived in the latter part of *Josiah's* Reign, or under his Sons; a little before the *Captivity* by the *Chaldeans*, which he foretold, *Hab.* 1. from *ver.* 5. to *ver.* 12. Habakkuk.
A. M.
3398.

When *Josiah* was Dead, the People took *Jeboahaz*, his Fourth Son, (called *Shallum*, *1 Chron.* 3. 15.) and anointing him, made him King in his Father's stead. He was Three and Twenty Years old when he began his Reign; which was *very short*: Yet *long enough* to shew his *Propensity to Evil*. For tho' he reigned but *Three Months*; yet in that time he did that which was *Evil* in the sight of the Lord, according as his wicked Ancestors had done.

At the Three Months end, *Pharaoh-Necho* King of *Egypt* (tho' he came not forth with any Design against *Judah*, yet being set upon by King *Josiah*, and prevailing) improved his *Victory* at *Megiddo* so far,
as

2 Kin. 23.
2 Chr. 35.

as to make the Crown of *Judah* Tributary to *Egypt*. Wherefore deposing *Jeboabaz*, he set up *Eliakim*, another of *Josiah's* Sons, to be King in his Room; changing his Name to *Jeboiakim*: And laid an easie Tribute on the Land, of an Hundred Talents of Silver, and a Talent of Gold, (but Forty and Two Thousand Pounds in all.) Which Money *Jeboiakim* raised by a General Tax upon the Land, rating every Man towards it, according to his Ability. And this Taxation it is probable the Prophet *Jeremiah* had respect to, when in his mournful Complaint he said of *Jerusalem*, *she that was great among the Nations, and Princess among the Provinces, how is she become Tributary?* *Lamen. 1. 1.*

As for *Jeboabaz* himself *Pharaoh-Necho*, when he Dethroned him, first put him in Bonds at *Riblah* (a City of *Syria*, where he left him in safe Custody, whilst he pursued his Expedition against the *Assyrian*;) And afterwards, at his Return, took him with him to *Egypt*; where he died, as the Prophet *Jeremiah* had foretold he should, *Jer. 22. 10, 11, 12.* There he bids the King and People of *Judah*, not weep for the Dead (by which he is supposed to mean King *Josiah*) neither lament him (for his own sake;) but weep sore for him that goeth away; for he shall return no more, nor see his Native Country. For (said he) Thus saith the Lord concerning *Shallum* (which was the right Name of *Jeboabaz*) the Son of *Josiah* King of *Judah*, who reigned instead of *Josiah* his Father, and who went forth out of this Place; he shall not return hither any more.

Nabum.

About this time it may be supposed the Prophet *Nabum* lived, and prophesied. Yet there is, I know, diversity of Opinions concerning his time. The *Jews* place him in the time of *Manasseh*. The Annotators on the Bishop's Bible set him before *Manasseh*, and about the time of *Hezekiah*. *Jerom* also places him under *Hezekiah*, about the time that *Sennacherib* besieged *Jerusalem*, after the Ten Tribes were gone into Captivity. But *Tremellius* and *Junius* refer him to the latter part of *Josiah's* Reign. Which seems the more likely, as being nearer to the Destruction of *Nineveh*, and the *Assyrian* Monarchy; which *Nabum's* Prophecy did more particularly relate to. Neither did this Prophet only prophesie against *Nineveh*; but the Prophet *Zephaniah* also, who began to prophesie in the Days of *Josiah* King of *Judah*; *Zeph. 1. 1.* prophesied directly against *Assyria* in General, and of the Desolation of *Nineveh* in Particular, *Chap. 2. ver. 13, &c.* But the *Assyrian* Rod (as it is called, *Isa. 10. 5.*) had not yet done all its work.

A. M.
3398.

Jeboiakim, who received both Name and Kingdom from *Pharaoh-Necho* King of *Egypt*, being Five and twenty Years old when he began to Reign, is said to have Reigned in *Jerusalem* Eleven Years (if there be not a Mistake in the Account.) But not taking warning by his Brother's Punishment, he also did Evil in the sight of the Lord, as his Brother had done; and so much the worse, by how much the longer.

In the beginning of the Reign of this King, the Lord commanded his Prophet *Jeremiah* to stand in the Court of the Lord's House, and deliver his Message to all the People of *Judah*, that came to worship there. Which Message was, To exhort them to Repent, and amend their ways, that he might not bring on them the Evil he had purposed. And to assure them, that if they did not hearken to his Admonition, amend their Lives, and walk in his Law; then would he make that House like *Shiloh* (which tho' the Ark of the Lord had abode there more than Three Hundred Years, he had given up to an utter Destruction) and would make that City (*Jerusalem*) a Curse (or Pattern for Cursing) to all the Nations of the Earth.

This

This Message so enraged the *Priests* and *false Prophets* (of which there were more than a good many) that, setting the People on, they ^{2 Kin. 23.} ^{2 Chr. 36.} seized on *Jeremiah*; and told him, that for his thus Prophefying *Destruction* to the *Temple*, and *Desolation* to the *City*, he should surely die. And all the People were gathered against him in the House of the Lord.

But when the *Princes* of *Judah* had notice given them of this Hurly-burly, they came up from the King's House, unto the House of the Lord; and sat down in the Entry of the New Gate of the Lord's House, to hear the Cause. And then the *Priests*, and the *false Prophets* who were his *Accusers*, exhibited their Charge against him, unto the *Princes*, and to all the People; saying, *This Man is worthy to die; for he hath Prophefied against this City, as ye (said they, appealing to the People) have heard with your Ears.*

The Prophet, having heard their Charge, did not deny the Fact, but defended it; saying unto the *Princes*, and to all the People present, *The Lord sent me to Prophecy against this House, and against this City, all the Words that ye have heard. Therefore now amend your Ways and your Doings, and obey the Voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will repent him of the Evil he hath pronounced against you. As for me (added he) Behold, I am in your hand, to do with me, as seemeth Good to you. But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to Death, ye shall* ^{Jer. 26.} *surely bring innocent Blood (that is, the Guilt of shedding innocent Blood) upon your selves, and upon this City, and upon the Inhabitants thereof: For of a Truth, the Lord hath sent me unto you, to speak all these Words in your Ears.*

When the *Princes* had heard *Jeremiah's* Defence, they and all the People (whom the *Priests* had before misled and drawn in, to bandy with them against the good Prophet) gave Judgment on *Jeremiah's* side; and said to the *Priests*, and to the *false Prophets*, *This Man is not worthy to die: For he hath spoken to us in the Name of the Lord our God.*

And to confirm this their Judgment by *Precedent*, certain of the *Elders* of the Land rose up, and thus spake to the Assembly.

'Micah, the Morasthite prophefied, in the Days of *Hezekiah* King of *Judah*, and spake to all the People of *Judah*, saying; *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Zion shall be plowed like a Field, and Jerusalem shall become Heaps, and the Mountain of the House, as the High-places of the Forest, Mic. 3. 12.* Did *Hezekiah*, and all *Judah*, put him to Death? *'Nay, did not the King fear the Lord, and besought the Lord; and the Lord repented him of the Evil, which he had pronounced against them? Wherefore, if we should answer your bloody Minds herein, we might procure great Evil against our Souls.*

It seems as if the *Priests* and *false Prophets*, to ballance this *Precedent* of the Prophet *Micah*, did urge another and fresher *Precedent*, of one that for Prophefying (as *Jeremiah* had done) against that City and Land, had been lately put to Death, even under this present King: For thus it follows in the Text. *And there was also a Man that Prophefied in the Name of the Lord, Urijah the Son of Shemajah of Kirjath-jearim. He Prophefied against this City, and against this Land, according to all the Words of Jeremiah. And when Jehoiakim the King with all his mighty Men, and all the Princes heard his words; the King sought to put him to Death: Which he hearing of, and being afraid, fled into Egypt. But Jehoiakim the King sent Men into Egypt after him; and they, fetching him from thence, brought him to the King, who caused him to be slain with the Sword, and his dead Body to be cast into the Graves of the common People.*

T t t t t

This

This was a *fresh Instance*, and in point of Fact, it was an *apt Precedent against Jeremiah*. So that it might, in all likelihood, have gone hard, at this time, with the good Prophet, had not the Lord raised him up a true and powerful Friend in the Court, which was *Abikam*. For thus it follows; *Nevertheless, the Hand of Abikam, the Son of Shaphan, was with Jeremiah; that they should not deliver him into the Hand of the People, to be put to Death*. Now *Shaphan*, we may remember, was Chancellor to King *Josiah*, and *Abikam* was one of his *Principal Counsellors*; whom he sent with the High-priest and others, to enquire of the Lord by the *Prophetess Huldah*, 2 Chron. 34. 20, 21.

The Prophecies of this Book, as well as divers of the other Prophets, are much *misplaced*, with respect to the *Order of time* wherein they were given forth; which is supposed to have happened through the Negligence of the Priests in those times, who had the Charge of Registering and keeping them.

For the manner was, when any of the Prophets had written any thing by way of Prophecy, he caused it to be affixed to the Gate of the Temple, where it remained for certain Days, that all might read, and take notice of it. And after it had stood there the appointed time, the Priests took it into the Temple to Record it in a Book; but, for want of *Diligence* and due Care, to enter them *in course*, as they were written, they left them in that *disorderly* manner, in which we have them.

But besides that, it must be considered, that divers of the Prophets (more especially *Jeremiah*, *Ezekiel*, and *Daniel*;) wrote in very *troublesome times*; *Ezekiel* and *Daniel* in the *Captivity*, and in *Babylon*; and *Jeremiah*, when all things, both in Church and State, were in very great Disorder; and the first Copy of his Book was *destroyed* by King *Jehoiakim*, Jer. 36. 23. So that it is not to be wondered at, that they are so *misplaced* as they are, but rather to be thankfully admired, that we have them at all.

The *Account of Times* also, and *Computation of Years*, wherein some chief Actions, mentioned by the Prophets, were performed, are so differently delivered; that it is hard, if possible, to reduce them to a Certainty. But that not being the chief End of my present Undertaking, I shall be the less regardful of it.

We observed before, that *Jehoiakim* was made King, by *Pharaoh-Necho* King of *Egypt*, under Tribute, 2 Kings 23. 34. Soon after which, *Assyria* prevailing against *Egypt*, 2 Kings 24. 7. whether *Jehoiakim* took occasion from thence to withhold his Tribute, and deny Subjection to the *Assyrian*; or whether only God brought it on him, for his evil Courses: *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon* (the Seat, or Chief City of the *Assyrian* Monarchy, after the Destruction of *Nineveh*) came up against him, and besieging *Jerusalem*, took both it and him, and carried him, with part of the Vessels of the House of God, to *Babylon*. Where, after he had been kept a while, he is supposed to have been sent back to *Jerusalem*, by the King of *Babylon*, (upon his *Submission*, and Promise of Fidelity for the future) and continued a *Tributary* King to *Nebuchadnezzar*, as he had been before to *Pharaoh-Necho*.

This expressly I do not find in the Holy Scripture; yet there are some Passages in it, that glance that way: And as it is the *common Opinion*, so it may somewhat help to make out the time of his Reign, and give more room for the Prophecies that belong to it.

At this time also, and with him, it is thought, and very probably, that the Prophet *Daniel*, with his three Companions, *Hananiah*, *Misbael*, and *Azariah*, were carried to *Babylon*. For *Daniel* himself delivers, that at the time, when *Nebuchadnezzar* took *Jehoiakim*, and the Vessels of the

the Lord's House, he spake unto *Ashpenaz*, the Master of the *Eunuchs*, that he should bring with him to *Babylon*, some of the Children of *Israel*, of the Seed of the King, and of the Princes; such as were well favoured, and without Blemish, of good Parts, and well Educated; that, being instructed in the Language, and Learning of the *Chaldeans* they might be fit to serve the King in his Palace: And that the *Eunuch* thereupon made choice of them four, *Dan.* 1. 3, 4, 6. Where leaving them, for a while, among the *Chaldeans*, to be trained up for future Service; let us go on, and see how it fared, in the mean time, with the Prophet *Jeremiah*. Jer. 26.

He, being freed, by the means of good *Abikam*, for this time, from the danger he was in by his Enemies the *Priests*, went on the more boldly in the Work of the Lord. And in the Fourth Year of King *Jehoiakim*, he delivered again a Message from the Lord, to the People of *Judah* and *Jerusalem*. In which, after he had, in an *Expostulatory Reproof*, reminded them of the many Warnings and Admonitions, that from time to time had been given them, and of their obstinate Disobedience; he told them, in the Name of the Lord, That because they had not hearkened to his words, the Lord would bring *Nebuchadnezzar* his Servant (then lately settled on the *Assyrian Throne*) with all the Northern Nations that were under him, against the Land of *Judah*, and City of *Jerusalem*, and would make them serve the King of *Babylon* Seventy Years.

Yet to leave them a Door of Hope, he also told them, that after they had born that *Seventy Years Servitude*, as a Punishment for their Transgressions, he would turn their Captivity, and would punish the *Assyrians* and the *Chaldeans*, and all the other Nations that had afflicted them for their Iniquities: Which he confirmed to them, by the Type of a Cup of Wine, called the *Wine-Cup of the Fury of the Lord*; which the Prophet was required to take at the Hand of the Lord, and to cause all those Nations (in a Typical Representation) to drink thereof, in token of the Calamities and Distresses, that should come upon them.

About this time also the Prophet was commanded to make him Bonds and Yokes, as a confirming Type of the Captivity, which was to come upon the People: But the Execution of this Command seems to have been deferred, 'till King *Zedekiah's* time, *Jer.* 27. v. 3. 12. Jer. 27.

Mean while *Jehoiakim*, after he had served *Nebuchadnezzar* three Years, withdrew his Service from him, and rebelled against him. Whereupon *Nebuchadnezzar* came up again against *Judah* to destroy it, in the Fourth Year of *Jehoiakim's* Reign. But before he came to *Jerusalem*, he fought with *Pharaoh-Necho* King of *Egypt*, in *Carchemish*, by the River *Euphrates*, and beat him; as the Prophet *Jeremiah* had foretold he should, *Jer.* 46. 2 Kin. 24.

The Coming up of this *Assyrian* Army frightened the *Rechabites*, the Posterity of *Rechab*, who came of *Jethro*, or *Hobab*, the *Kenite*, and made them betake themselves to *Jerusalem* for Safety. They were a People, who, by the Institution of *Jonadab* their Founder, built not Houses, but dwelt in Tents.

By these the Lord intending to convince, and reprove *Jehoiakim* and the Jews, he commanded *Jeremiah* the Prophet to bring these *Rechabites* into one of the Chambers, in the House of the Lord, and to give them Wine to drink. The Prophet did go; and having set Pots of Wine before them, invited them to drink. But they refused; alledging that *Jonadab*, the Son of *Rechab*, their Father, had commanded them, That neither they, nor their Children, should drink any Wine for ever, nor build any House, nor sow Seed, nor plant any Vineyard: But to dwell in Tents

Jer. 35. Tents all their days, that they might live many days in the Land where-
in they were Strangers. And they affirmed, that they had obeyed the
Voice, and kept the Charge of *Jonadab* their *Founder*, in all that he had
charged them; having drunk no Wine, neither they nor their Wives,
their Sons, nor their Daughters. Neither had they built Houses to
dwell in, nor possessed Vineyards, nor sowed Fields, but had dwelt in
Tents, and had obeyed and done, according to all that their Father
Jonadab had commanded.

Now had the Prophet gain'd his Point. Wherefore having commend-
ed the *Rechabites*, for their having so steadily adhered to, and observed
the Command of their Father *Jonadab*, and promised them a Reward
from the Lord, therefore he turned it upon the Inhabitants of *Judah* and
Jerusalem; upbraiding them that they, who were the Seed of *Abraham*,
and peculiar People of the Lord, should be less regardful of the Com-
mands of God, whom they called their Father, and who had been more
than a Father to them, than the *Rechabites*, who were not of the Stock
of *Israel*, had been of the Commands of their Ancestor, *Jonadab*.

Jer. 36. But this not working the desired Effect upon the People of *Judah*
and *Jerusalem*, the Lord commanded his Prophet *Jeremiah*, to get
him a Roll of a Book, and write therein all the Prophecies which the
Lord had given him against *Israel*, and against *Judah*, and against other
Nations, from the first of his beginning to Prophecy, in the Thirteenth
Year of *Josiah*; to see if the House of *Judah*, when they should hear
all the Plagues summed up together, which the Lord for their Transgres-
sions, had threatned to bring upon them, would return every Man from
his evil way, that the Lord might forgive their Iniquity and Sin.

Jeremiah, thereupon calling to him *Baruch* the Scribe (who usually
was his *Amanuensis*) dictated to him, and he wrote from the Prophet's
Mouth all the words which the Lord had spoken unto him upon a Roll
of a Book, that is, upon a Book that was to roll up.

When it was finished, the Prophet bid *Baruch* take it (in as much as
he himself was shut up, that he might not go into the House of the Lord)
and read in it the words of the Lord, in the hearing of all the People,
in the House of the Lord, upon the Fast day. This it seems, was a Fast
of their own appointing, as (we are told) their manner was, when
they feared War, or any great Plague from God; as now they did by the
Babylonians. It may be (added he) they will present their Supplication
before the Lord, and will return every one from his evil way! For great
is the Anger and the Fury, which the Lord hath pronounced against
this People.

What is meant here by the Prophet's saying, he was shut up; or in
what manner he was shut up, so that he could not go into the House
of the Lord, is somewhat uncertain. The Bible Note says, *He was
shut up in Prison through the malice of the Priests*. They, no doubt were
malicious enough to have done it: But it doth not appear he was so shut
up. Nay, it rather appears he was at liberty: For in *ver. 19.* the Princes
advised *Baruch*, that he and *Jeremiah* should hide themselves, and let
no body know where they were. And bid they were, *ver. 26.* which
Jeremy could not have been, if he had been in Prison. *Tremellius* and
Junius suppose Three ways of his being shut up, and leave us to take
which of the Three we like best. The First is, That the King had for-
bidden him to go into the Temple to speak to the People: But the Pro-
phets of God did not use to observe such Prohibitions of their Prophe-
tick Ministry. The Second is, That the chief Priests had excommunicat-
ed him, and therefore he might not go: But that, in all likelihood, he
would have less regarded. The Third is, that God, to provide for the
Safety

Safety of his Prophet, and to punish the People, would *not let him go* amongst them : This, of the Three, seems the most likely : And so, his being *shut up*, was by a *stop* in himself ; a *Restraint* in his Spirit or Mind.

However, according to *Jeremiah's* Direction, when the *Fast-day* was come, *Baruch* went, and read in the Book the Words of the Lord, in the House of the Lord, to all the People of *Jerusalem*, and those that came from the Cities of *Judah* thither. Which when *Micajah* (the Son of *Gemariah*, in whose Chamber the Book was read) had heard, he went down into the *Secretary's-Office*, in the King's House, where all the *Princes* sat ; and declared unto them what he had heard, out of the Book which *Baruch* had read to the People.

Whereupon the *Princes* sent to *Baruch* to come to them and bring the *Roll* with him : Which he did. Then they bid him sit down, and read it to them : Which he did also. But when they had heard it, they were all of them *afraid*. And having examined him about it, and satisfied themselves, that it was the Prophet's Words, or of his *dictating* ; and that *Baruch* was but the *Penman* : They advised him to go and *hide* himself, both he and the Prophet ; and let no Man know where they were. For (said they) we will assuredly tell the King of all these Words. And accordingly, laying up the *Roll* in the *Secretary's Office*, they went into the Court to the King ; and told him what they had heard read.

It being the *Ninth* Month with them (which takes in part of the *Tenth* with us) the King sat in his *Winter-house*, having a *Fire* on the *Hearth* before him : And upon the Report the *Princes* had made of the *Roll* which *Baruch* had read to them, the King sent *Jehudi* (one of his Attendance) to fetch it ; who having brought it, read it, in the hearing of the King, and of all the *Princes* that stood beside him.

But he had not read above Three or Four *Leaves* (that is, Three or Four Paragraphs, or Spaces in the *Roll*) when the King, displeased with it, cut it in pieces with a *Pen-knife* ; and (tho' Three of his *Princes* interceded with him, that he would not) he *cast it into the Fire* that was on the *Hearth*, till all the *Roll* was consumed.

This shewed a great *Obstinacy* and *Impenitence* in the King, and in the rest of his *Servants*. And indeed they were *not dismay'd*, nor rent their *Garments*, at the hearing of such *terrible* Judgments denounced against them : But the King was so far from that, that he sent some Officers to *apprehend Baruch* and the Prophet *Jeremiah*. But they were disappointed : For the Lord had hid his *Servants* from them. Jer. 36.

This *Presumptuous* Act of the King, in burning the *Roll* which the Lord had commanded his Prophet to write, provoked the Lord exceedingly. So that he commanded the Prophet to take him *another Roll*, and to write in it all the Words which were in the First *Roll*, which the King had burnt. And withal, that he should say to *Jeboiakim* King of *Judah*, *Thou hast burnt this Roll, because therein was written, that the King of Babylon shall certainly come, and destroy this Land. Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning Jeboiakim King of Judah, He shall have none to sit upon the Throne of David : And his dead Body shall be cast out, in the Day to the Heat, and in the Night to the Frost. I will punish him, and his Seed, and his Servants, for their Iniquity : And I will bring upon them, and upon the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the Men of Judah, all the Evil that I have pronounced against them. But they hearkened not.*

The like *fearful Judgments* did the Prophet denounce against this wicked King, in the 22 Chapter of his Prophecy, from *ver. 15. to 20.*

U u u u u

Where

Jer. 22. Where having briefly touched some of the *Vertues* of his Father, the good King *Josiah*, and his *prosperous* Reign, as the *Effect* thereof: He charges this King, *that his Eyes and his Heart were altogether set upon his Covetousness, and to shed innocent Blood; to oppress, and to do violence.* And then pours forth this Judgment upon him, Thus saith the Lord concerning *Jeboiakim*, the Son of *Josiah* King of *Judah*, *They shall not lament for him, as they that say, Ah my Brother! Or, Ah, Sister! They shall not lament for him so much as to say, Ah Lord! Or, Ah his Glory! But he shall be buried with the Burial of an Ass, dragg'd and cast forth beyond the Gates of Jerusalem.*

2 Chr. 36. A. M. 3409. Thus did the Lord give *warning upon warning*: But when no Warning would prevail, nor any Threatning was regarded, the Lord at length gave up this *hardened* King into the Hand of *Nebuchadnezzar*; who took *Jeboiakim*, and bound him in Fetters, intending to have carried him to *Babylon*, if he had not died on the way.

2 Kin 24. *Jeboiakim* left a Son behind him, named *Jeboiachin* (called also *Jechoniah*, *1 Chron. 3. 16.*) a Youth, if not a very Child. 'Tis true, he is said, in the Book of *Kings* to be *Eighteen Years Old*: But in the Book of the *Chronicles* he is said to be but *Eight Years Old* when he began to Reign. Whatever his Age was, he Succeeded his Father in the Throne; and as young as he was, did Evil in the sight of the Lord, as his Father had done. From which, and the Message that was thereupon sent him, it is more reasonable to think him *Eighteen*, than but *Eight Years Old*.

Jer. 22. For to him the Prophet *Jeremiah* was sent with this Message, 'As I live, saith the Lord, tho' *Coniah* (so, in contempt, he curtailed *Jechoniah*) the Son of *Jeboiakim* King of *Judah* were the Signer upon my right Hand, yet would I pluck thee thence: And I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy Life, and whose Face thou fearest, even *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*; and into the hand of the *Chaldeans*. And I will cast thee out, and thy Mother that bare thee, into another Country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die: But to the Land whereunto they desire to return, thither shall they not return.

Then to obviate an Objection, which might be made, in favour of the King on this wise, *Is this Man, Coniah, a despised broken Idol? Is he a Vessel, wherein is no Pleasure?* If not, wherefore dost thou say, They shall be cast out, both he and his Seed, into a Land which they know not? The Prophet makes this general Appeal. *O Earth, Earth, Earth, bear the Word of the Lord.* Thus saith the Lord, *Write this Man Childless; a Man that shall not prosper in his Days: For no Man of his Seed shall prosper, sitting upon the Throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.*

The Judgment here denounced, was quickly executed. For in the same Year, *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*, came up, and besieged *Jerusalem*: And *Jeboiachin*, not able, or not daring to defend it, quickly yielded. And by that time he had reigned Three Months and Ten Days (at the most) he went out, with his Mother, his Princes, his Servants and his Officers, to the King of *Babylon*: Who carried them all away to *Babylon*, with the mighty Men of Valour, to the Number of *Ten Thousand* in all. Amongst whom was *Mordecai*, Cousin and Guardian to Queen *Ester*, *Esth. 2. 5, 6, 7.* And with them he took also all the Treasures of the House of the Lord, and of the King's House (that he could find:) And the chief of the Handicraftsmen, as *Smiths* and *Carpenters*, &c. leaving the poorest sort of the People behind.

In the Room of this *Jeconiah*, *Nebuchadnezzar* set up *Mattaniah* his Uncle, Third Son of King *Josiah*; whose Name he changed to *Zedekiah*: And he is said to have reigned Eleven Years.

But he also, tho' he had seen the Ruin of his Two Brothers *Jehoahaz*, or *Shallum*; and *Jeboiakim*, (or *Eliakim*) and of his Cousin *Jeconiah* (or *Jeboiachin*) took not warning by their *Miseries*: But did Evil in the sight of the Lord, as they had done; and did not humble himself before *Jeremiah* the Prophet, tho' he spake to him from the Mouth of the Lord, 2 Chron. 36. 12. A. M. 3409.

The Lord thereupon shewed the Prophet, in Vision, the State of both them that were gone into Captivity, and of them that yet remained. This was represented to him by Two Baskets of Figs: The one (comparatively at least) very good: And the other stark nought. The good Figs were an Emblem of that part of *Judah*, which was lately carried away Captive to *Babylon*; whom the Lord said, he had sent into the Land of the *Chaldeans* for their good: And promised, that he would set his Eye upon them for good; and would bring them (in their Posterity) back again, and settle them in that good Land. But the evil Figs (which were so bad they were not Eatable) were a Figure of King *Zedekiah*, with his Princes and People, that remained yet in the Land of *Judah*; amongst which, they were comprehended, who he fore-saw would run to *Egypt* for Succour. All whom the Lord, by his Prophet, threatened to deliver up, to be removed into all the Kingdoms of the Earth for their Hurt, that they might be made a *Reproach*, and a *Proverb*, a *Taunt* and a *Curse*, in all Places whither he should drive them. And (added he) I will send the *Sword*, the *Famine*, and the *Pestilence* among them, 'till they be consumed from off the Land, which I gave to them, and to their Fathers, Jer. 24.

The Prophet, it seems, in *Jeboiakim's* time, had by the Command of *Jer. 27.* the Lord made *Bands* and *Yokes*, and put them upon his Neck, as *Types* or *Emblems* of the *Bondage*, which the Lord had long and often threatened, to bring upon the People of *Judah*, as well as upon other Lands. And now the Lord commanded him to send of those *Bands* and *Yokes* to the several Kings of *Edom*, *Moab*, *Ammon*, *Tyre* and *Zidon*, by their *Ambassadors* (who came to *Zedekiah* at *Jerusalem*;) with Command, that they should let their Masters know, that the Lord had given all their Lands to *Nebuchadnezzar*, King of *Babylon*, his Servant; and to warn them, that they should not hearken to their *Prophets*, *Diviners*, *Dreamers*, *Incanters*, *Sorcerers*, who perswaded them otherwise, but should submit to him at their perils.

But to *Zedekiah* King of *Judah*, the Prophet went himself, and said, Bring your Necks (both thou and thy People) under the Yoke of the King of *Babylon*, and serve him and his People, and live: For why will ye die by the *Sword*, by the *Famine*, and by the *Pestilence*, as the Lord hath spoken against the Nation that will not serve the King of *Babylon*? That will not stoop to his Judgments, by submitting themselves to his Rod (the *Assyrian*, *Isa.* 10. 5.) which he had appointed for their *Correction*.

Then, having cautioned the King against his false *Prophets*, who soothed him up with pleasing, but false Stories; he turned himself to the *Priests*, and to the *People*; whom also he warned, not to hearken to their *Prophets*, who told them, they should be so far from going Captives themselves, that the Vessels of the Lord's House, which had been carried to *Babylon*, should shortly be brought back again: For he assured them, They Prophefied a Lie to them. And he bid them put their *Prophets* upon the *Tryal*; that if they were *Prophets* indeed, and had the Word of the Lord with them, as they pretended, they should make

make *Intercession* to the Lord of Hosts, that the Vessels which were yet left in the House of the Lord, and in the King's House, go not to *Babylon*, after the rest: Which that they should, he now again expressly foretold.

Jer. 28. This so nettled the false Prophets, that one of them, whose Name was *Hananiab*, soon after set upon *Jeremiah* in the House of the Lord, before both Priests and People. And taking upon him to prophesie, in the *Stile* and *Phrase* of the true Prophets, he said; Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, the God of *Israel*, saying, *I have broken the Yoke of the King of Babylon. And within two full Years, will I bring again into this Place all the Vessels of the Lord's House, which Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon, took away, and carried to Babylon. I will also bring again to this Place Jeconiah the Son of Jehoiakim King of Judah, that went into Babylon, saith the Lord: For I will break the Yoke of the King of Babylon.*

The Prophet *Jeremiah* heard all this. And being willing to shew his good Affection to his People and Country, only said, *Amen*, I wish it might be so; and that the Lord would perform what thou hast spoken; but the Issue will prove which of us is in the right.

This soft Answer emboldned *Hananiab* to go further. Wherefore stepping to *Jeremiah*, he took from off his Neck the Yoke, which (for a Sign of the Captivity) the Lord had commanded him to wear; and brake it in the presence of the People: Saying withal, in confirmation of his former Prediction, Thus saith the Lord, *Even so will I break the Yoke of Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon, from off the Neck of all Nations, within the space of Two full Years.*

The Prophet *Jeremy* (whose Tongue was not, as the others was, his own, to speak both when and what he pleased) made him no Answer at that time: But went his way. And now, no doubt, *Hananiab* the false Prophet, was cried up among the People; as having foiled *Jeremiah*, and got the Day. But the Lord would not suffer *Hananiab*, having offered such Indignity to himself, and his Prophet, to go off so.

Wherefore the Word of the Lord came unto *Jeremiah* the Prophet (after that *Hananiab* had broken the Yoke from off his Neck :) Bidding him, Go and tell *Hananiab*, Thus saith the Lord, *Thou hast broken the Yokes of Wood: But thou shalt make for them Yokes of Iron. For thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel; I have put a Yoke of Iron upon the Neck of all the Nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon, and they shall serve him: And I have given him the Beasts of the Field also.*

Having thus contradicted *Hananiab's* false Prophecy, he went on and said, *Hear now Hananiab, The Lord hath not sent thee: But thou makest this People to trust in a Lie. Therefore, thus saith the Lord, Behold I will cast thee from off the Face of the Earth: And this Year thou shalt die; because thou hast taught Rebellion against the Lord. And the Lord made good his Word: For Hananiab died the same Year.*

Some time after, *Jeconiah*, with the Queen his Mother, and the Princes of *Judah* was carried Captive to *Babylon*; *Zedekiah* his Uncle (whom *Nebuchadnezzar* had made King in his stead) sent Ambassadors it seems (upon some occasion, perhaps to pay his Tribute) to *Nebuchadnezzar* at *Babylon*. By these the Prophet *Jeremiah* sent a Letter, directed to the Residue of the Elders, which were carried away Captive, and to the Priests and the Prophets, and to all the People, whom *Nebuchadnezzar* had carried away Captive from *Jerusalem* to *Babylon*.

Jer. 29. The Tenour of this Letter was, To let them know, from the Lord, and in his Name, that their present Captivity was by God's appointment; who had caused them to be carried away from *Jerusalem* to *Babylon*:

lon: And that it should be a *long Captivity*, of *Seventy Years* continuance. That therefore they should not suffer themselves to be *deceived* *Jer. 29.* by their *false Prophets* and *Dreamers*, that were among them (who would persuade them they should quickly return to their own Land again :) But that they should *settle* contentedly (in submission to the Will of God) in the Places where they were put (which is set forth by *Building, Planting, and Marrying* for Propagation and Increase,) and should *seek the Peace of the City* (where *City* is, by *Senechdoche*, put for the *Nation*) whither the Lord had caused them to be carried, and pray unto the Lord for it, because *in the Peace thereof they should have Peace.*

Then for their *Encouragement*, he gives them a *comforting* Promise from the Lord; that, when the *Seventy Years* should be *expired*, he would visit them in good will: And would bring them back again into their own Land; and would afterwards be *gracious* to them, and answer them when they should call upon him.

And because it is accounted (*Solamen miseris, socios habuisse doloris*) some sort of Comfort to the Afflicted, that they are not alone in Sufferings, but that others also taste of the same bitter Cup with them; he told them, the Lord would visit their Brethren, that were not gone into Captivity with them, but remained yet at *Jerusalem*, both King and People, with *sooner Judgments* than he had done them. For he would punish these with the *Sword*, with the *Famine*, and with the *Pestilence*; and would make them like those *vile Figs* (which the Lord had shewed him in a Vision, *Chap. 24.*) which for their badness, could not be eaten: And he would *give them up* to be carried away to all the Kingdoms of the Earth, to be made a *Curse*, and an *Astonishment*, and an *Hissing*, and a *Reproach* among all the Nations whither he would drive them; because they had not hearkened to his Words, which he had spoken to them by his Servants the Prophets.

Then from the *General* turning to *Particulars*, he denounced an express and terrible Judgment from the Lord, against *Two* of the false Prophets (whom those Captive Jews had boasted of, *ver. 15.*) *Ahab* and *Zedekiah* by Name, which he bid all the Captives take notice of; which was, That because these Two Men had *prophesied a Lie* unto them in the Name of the Lord, therefore the Lord would deliver those Two Men into the Hand of *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*, who should *slay them* before their Eyes: As it seems he did, by *burning them alive*. For it follows in the Prophet's Letter, and of them shall be taken up a *Curse*, by all the Captivity of *Judah*, which are in *Babylon*; who, when they would wish the greatest Evil to any one, shall say, *The Lord make thee like Zedekiah, and like Ahab, whom the King of Babylon roasted in the Fire.*

The Cause of this Severity, on *Nebuchadnezzar's* part, may reasonably be supposed to be, their prophesying that the *Jewish* Captives should speedily be delivered out of his Hand. Which was looked upon as a *moving of Sedition, a raising of Rebellion, and a disturbing of the Peace* of the *Babylonish* Government. But the true Cause, on *God's* part, was, because they had *done Villany* in *Israel*; having committed *Adultery* with their Neighbours Wives, and spoken *lying Words* in the Name of the Lord, Words which he had not commanded them.

Upon the Receipt of this Letter, one *Shemaiah* (who made himself some body among the Captive Jews in *Babylon*) took upon him to write to *Zephaniah* the Priest (who was next in place to *Serajah* the High-Priest, *Jer. 52. 24.*) and to the rest of the Priests at *Jerusalem*; *soothing up Zephaniah*, as if the Lord had made him such a Priest, as *Jehoiadab*

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Jer. 29. the High-Priest was of old, to *imprison*, and *stock Offenders*. Then complaining to him of *Jeremiah*, for having written to them in *Babylon*, that this Captivity would be long; and that therefore they should build, plant, and settle there: He represented *Jeremiah* as a *Madman*, a Prophet of his own making; and therefore would have Priest *Zephaniah* put him into *Little Ease*; that is, into Prison, and in the Stocks there.

Zephaniah, having received this Letter from *Shemaiah*, read it to *Jeremiah*. Whereupon the Word of the Lord came to *Jeremiah*, requiring him to send again unto all them of the Captivity, and to say unto them, in the Name of the Lord, concerning *Shemaiah* (whom he called *The Dreamer*) 'Because *Shemaiah* hath prophesied unto you, and I sent him not, but he hath caused you to trust in a Lie, Therefore thus saith the Lord, I will punish *Shemaiah*, and his Seed. He shall not have a Man to dwell among this People; neither shall he behold the Good, that I will do for my People, saith the Lord, because he hath taught Rebellion against me.

The good Prophet, having thus discharged his Duty to those that were already gone into Captivity, returned to warn them that remained behind; that they, by turning from their Evil Ways, and returning to the Lord, might have prevented their own Captivity and Ruin. And the better to furnish him with fresh Matter of Argument to persuade them, the Lord sent him down to the *Potter's House*; where, by observing the Power the Potter had over his Clay, to make or mar his work at his Pleasure, he might thence take occasion to inculcate to the People, the *uncontroulable Power* which the Lord had over them. Which when he had done, they desperately answered, *We will walk after our own Devices, and we will every one do the Imagination of his Evil Heart.*

Jer. 18. The Lord thereupon threatening them by his Prophet, to scatter them, as with an *East-wind*, before their Enemies, and make their Land desolate: They flattered themselves, that because they had the Law among them, and the Priests, and their own Prophets on their side, they were out of Danger of the Mischiefs threatened. For the Law (said they) shall not perish from the Priest, nor Counsel from the Wise, nor the Word from the Prophet. And therefore concluding *Jeremiah* was wrong, they combined against him; and said, *Come, let us devise Devices against Jeremiah, and let us smite him with the Tongue: And let us not give heed to any of his Words.*

Jer. 19. This moved the afflicted Prophet to pour forth his Complaint unto the Lord against them. And the Lord thereupon bid him get him a *Potter's earthen Bottle*; and taking with him some of the most ancient both of the People and of the Priests, go forth to the Valley of the Son of *Hinnom* (called *Tophet*) and there proclaim the Words that he should tell him (which were dreadful Threatnings of extream Calamities, expressed in *Jer. 19.* from verse 3. to 14.) and then break the Bottle before them, as a Type of the breaking of that People to pieces. All which the Prophet performed; and then coming back from *Tophet*, he took up his standing in the Court of the Lord's House, and said to all the People;

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of *Israel*, Behold I will bring upon this City, and upon all her Towns, all the Evil that I have pronounced against it; because they have hardened their Necks that they might not hear my word.

Pashur, Son of *Immer* the Priest, being at that time a chief Governor in the House of the Lord, when he heard *Jeremiah* prophesy these Things, not only struck him, but put him in the Stocks that were in the High-

High-gate of *Eenjamin*, by the House of the Lord: And kept him in the Stocks *all Night*, but on the Morrow he took him out again. Then *Jer. 20.* said *Jeremiah* to him, *The Lord hath not called thy Name Pashur*, which signifies *encreasing Liberty* (for he had taken Liberty from the Prophet:) *But Magor Missabib*; that is, *Fear round about*. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, *I will make thee a Terror to thy self, and to all thy Friends, and they shall fall by the Sword of their Enemies, and thine Eyes shall behold it.* And I will give all *Judah* into the Hand of the King of *Babylon*, and he shall carry them Captive into *Babylon*, and shall slay many of them with the Sword. — And thou, *Pashur*, and all that dwell in thine House, shall go into Captivity; and thou shalt come to *Babylon*, and there thou shalt die, and shalt be buried there, thou and thy Friends, to whom thou hast prophesied Lies.

Now because the Exercise which *Jeremiah* had with this perverse People, as well those of them that were gone to *Babylon*, as those that remained in *Jerusalem* (of which he mournfully complains in the rest of this 20th Chapter) was very great, the Lord raised him up a Fellow-labourer, who by taking part of the Work, might make his Burden somewhat the lighter; and by prophesying the same thing, might confirm his Prophecies among the People, and therein be a Comfort unto him.

This was *Ezekiel* the Priest, who, having been carried to *Babylon* *Ezek. 1.* among the Captives, when King *Jeboiachin* (*alias Jeconiah*) was carried away; was in the Fifth Year of that King's, and his own Captivity, called to the Office of a Prophet, and made to see the Visions of God. And having been by the glorious Discoveries of the Lord unto him, encouraged, strengthened, instructed, and fitted for the Service (of which he gives an Account in his Three first Chapters) he was commanded to take *Chap. 2, 3.* a Tile (or Plank) and having pourtray'd upon it the City *Jerusalem*, to lay siege against it, and build a Fort against it, and cast up a Mount against it, and set a Camp against it, and plant Battering Rams against it, round about; all in pourtraiture: And then to take an Iron Pan, and set it for an Iron Wall between him and the City.

By these, and by certain other Postures and Actions, as by lying a certain time on his Left-side, then a certain time on his Right-side, and uncovering his Arm: By making filthy Bread, of mixed and unusual Grain. And by eating his Bread by Weight, and drinking his Water by Measure, the Prophet exhibited unto his People a plain Type of the Siege that should shortly be laid against *Jerusalem*, the Force and Strength of the Batteries, and the manifold Hardships and Miseries which the Besieged should thereby sustain. All which he describes in his Fourth Chapter.

And in his Fifth Chapter, by another Type, of shaving his Head and Beard, dividing the Hair by Weight, burning a Third part of it with Fire, cutting another Third part with a Knife, scattering another Third part in the Wind, and binding up a small part in the Skirt of his Garment, and then casting some of that small part also into the Fire, he set before his People the Destruction, and Dispersion of the Residue of the Jews, after *Jerusalem* should be taken. *Ezek. 8.*

The next Year (which was the Sixth of that Captivity) as the *Ezek. 4, 5.* Prophet *Ezekiel* was sitting in his House, among the Captives of *Babylon*, having the Elders of *Judah* (then Captives there) before him; the Hand (that is, the Power of the Lord) fell upon him: And the Spirit lifting him up between the Earth and the Heaven, brought him in a Vision to *Jerusalem*; where the Lord leading him from Place to Place, shewed him the Abominations, as well private as publick, of the Men of *Judah* and *Jerusalem*. And

And having gone through all that, he shewed him, by another *Vision* of *Six Men* with their *destroying Weapons* in their Hands, the *Slaughter* that should be made of these wicked People: And the *Preservation* of the few godly Ones amongst them, by the *Vision* of a *Man*, with an *Inkhorn* in his Hand, going before those *Slaughter-men*, and setting a *mark* upon the *Fore-heads* of them that should be spared. Which, with other like *Visions*, tending to set forth the *Sin* and *Judgment* of that People: And his being brought back again in *Vision*, by the Spirit of God to *Chaldea*, and his relating to his Fellow-Captives, what in those *Visions* the Lord had shewed him, are delivered and described in his 9, 10, and 11th Chapters

Very *Punctual*, and very *Particular* is this Prophet, in setting down the Dates of his *Visions*; and that sometimes not to a *Year* only, or a *Month*, but to a very *Day*.

Ezek. 1. This *First Vision* he dates on the *Fifth Day* of the *Fourth Month* in the *Thirtieth Year*; which was the *Fifth Year* of *Jeboiachin's* Captivity: But from whence this *Thirtieth Year* should commence, the Text doth not express. It is pretty generally understood to be from the time that the Book of the Law was found, 2 *Chron.* 34. 15. which was in the *Eighteenth Year* of the Reign of *Josiah*, who Reigned *Fourteen Years* after. Which *Fourteen Years*, with the *Eleven Years* of *Jeboiakim*, and *Five Years* of *Jeboiachin's* Captivity, make up the *Thirty Years*.

Thus did the Lord, by these two eminent Prophets, visit his People with Warning after Warning; and both by very *significant Types*, and direct and positive Prophecies, endeavour'd to Reclaim them. But at length, after very many Warnings and Threatnings given and *sighted*, the Lord brought upon King *Zedekiah* and his People the *Destruction* so often foretold: Which *Zedekiah* himself was instrumental to hasten. For he *Rebelling* against *Nebuchadnezzar*, who had made him King, *Nebuchadnezzar* came up with all his Army against *Jerusalem*, and pitching against it, *built Forts* against it round about.

2 *Kin.* 25. This *Siege* was laid on the *Tenth Day* of the *Tenth Month*, in the *Ninth Year* of *Zedekiah's* Reign. And was shewed by the Lord to *Ezekiel* in *Chaldea*, at a great Distance, on the very self same Day. And then also did the Lord, by several fresh *Types* (as that, of *setting on a Pot with Water*, and *seething therein the Choice* of the *Flock*, with the *Scum* in it: And that other, of *Taking away* suddenly the *Prophet's Wife*, and forbidding him to mourn for her Death) set forth both the *Sin*, and the *Punishment* of the People; which should not be lamented.

Ezek. 24. Fer. 34. The City being now *shut up*, the Lord sent his Prophet *Jeremiah* to King *Zedekiah* with this Message. ' Thus saith the Lord, the God of *Israel*. Behold, I will give this City into the Hand of the King of *Babylon*, and he shall burn it with Fire; and thou shalt not escape out of his Hand, but shalt surely be taken, and be delivered into his Hand; and thou shalt see the King of *Babylon*, and he shall speak with thee Face to Face, and thou shalt go to *Babylon*.

Then, a little to *alleviate* this hard Message, the Prophet assured him from the Lord, that he should not die by the Sword, but should die a natural Death; and that he should be lamented, and his Funeral performed with burning of Odours, in like manner as had been done for the former Kings, his Predecessors.

After the Prophet had delivered this Message to King *Zedekiah*, he with his People, thinking to *atone* for former Sins, by *some shew* of Reformation, agreed together, to proclaim *Liberty* to the *Hebrew Servants*, of either Sex. Accordingly, both King, Princes, and Chief of the People entred into a *Covenant* before the Lord, that none should serve himself

himself of his Brother a Jew : But that every one should let his Man-servant, and Maid-servant, being an *Hebrew*, or *Hebrewess*, go free (at the end of Six Years Service, according as the Law directed, *Exod.* 21. 2. *Deut.* 15. 12.) And this Covenant, it seems, they ratified by the *antient* and *solemn* Ceremony of dividing a Calf (or Heifer) into two parts, and passing between the parts ; which imported a sort of *Imprecation* on themselves, that they might be so cut asunder, in case they did not keep the Covenant they then entred into.

Upon this *Proclamation*, the Servants were set free : But the *Insincerity* of the *Masters* quickly appeared, For in a while after this, the *Army* of the King of *Egypt* coming to relieve *Jerusalem*, the *Chaldeans* hearing of their Coming, raised their Siege from before *Jerusalem*, and went to meet and fight the *Egyptians*. Jer. 37.

The *Jews* thereupon pleasing themselves with a persuasion that the *Egyptians* (in this case, their *Friends*) would beat the *Chaldeans* (their *Enemies*) and that therefore their Danger was over ; repented their having *manumitted* their Servants, and reducing them into Subjection again, caused them to return to their respective Services, *Chap.* 34. 11.

This *Tergiversation* so highly provoked the Lord, that he forthwith sent his Prophet *Jeremiah* to them, giving him in charge to say : ‘ Thus saith the Lord, the God of *Israel*, I made a *Covenant* with your Fathers, when I brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*, the *House of Bond-men*, That every Man should let his Brother, an *Hebrew*, go free from him, when he had served him six Years ; but your Fathers did not obey me. And now ye were turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming Liberty every Man to his Neighbour, and ye had made a *Covenant* before me, in the House which is called by my Name. But ye have turned back, and polluted my Name (so is the Breach of *Covenant* called, that is made in his Name) and ye have caused every Man his Servant, and his Handmaid, whom they had set at liberty at their Pleasure, to return to their Services, and have brought Jer. 34. them into Subjection, to be your Servants and Handmaids again.

‘ Therefore thus saith the Lord, Since ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming Liberty (and keeping to it :) Behold, I proclaim Liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the *Sword*, to the *Pestilence*, and to the *Famine* ; and I will make you to be removed into all the Kingdoms of the Earth. And the Men that have transgressed my *Covenant*, and have not performed the words of the *Covenant*, which they made before me, when they cut the Calf in twain, and passed between the Parts thereof, even the *Princes* of *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, the *Eunuchs* and the *Priests*, and all the People of the Land, that passed between the parts of the Calf, them will I give into the Hand of their Enemies, that seek their Life ; even into the Hand of the King of *Babylon's* Army, which are gone up from you. For behold, I will command, saith the Lord, and cause them to come again to this City ; and they shall fight against it, and take it, and burn it with Fire : And I will make the Cities of *Judah* a *Desolation*, without an Inhabitant.

Upon this, probably it was, that King *Zedekiah* sent *Jebucal*, and *Zephaniah* the Priest to the Prophet *Jeremiah*, to desire him to pray unto the Lord their God for them. But the Answer the Prophet gave them from the Lord, was this.

‘ Thus shall ye say to the King of *Judah*, who sent you to me ; Behold, *Pharaoh's* Army, which is come forth to help you, shall return into their own Land. And the *Chaldeans* shall come again, and shall fight against this City and take it, and burn it. Therefore thus saith the Lord, Deceive not your selves with a Conceit, that the *Chaldeans* shall

‘ shall surely depart from you ; for they shall not depart. Nay, tho’
 Fer. 37. ‘ ye had smitten the whole Army of the *Chaldeans*, that fight against
 ‘ you, and had left none of them, but *wounded Men* ; yet should even
 ‘ they rise up, every Man from his Tent, and should burn this City with
 ‘ Fire.

The *Prophet* was not yet put in Prison ; but went up and down amongst the People *at Liberty* ; and intending to take this Opportunity (now that the *Chaldean-Army* being risen from the Siege, the Gates were open, and the Way was clear) to leave *Jerusalem*, and to go into the Land of *Benjamin* (perhaps to his own City *Anathoth*, which was not far off,) he walked forth, in order thereunto. But when he was in the Gate of *Benjamin*, where the Guard was kept, *Irijah*, a Captain of the Guard, charging him that he was going to fall away to the *Chaldeans*, seized him for a *Defserter*.

Jeremiah bluntly told him, *It was false*, and that he was not falling away to the *Chaldeans* : But the *buffing Captain* would not hear him, but had him away to the *Princes*. They were in *such a Rage* at the *Prophet*, that they fell on him and beat him ; and not content with that, they committed him to Prison too, in the House of *Jonathan* the Secretary (for there, for the greater Security, they had made the Prison) and into the innermost *Dungeon* was poor *Jeremy* put.

After the good *Prophet* had lain in this filthy Prison many Days, King *Zedekiah* sent, and took him out, and had him brought privately to his House : Where between themselves, the King asked him, *If there was any word from the Lord* (meaning, concerning him.) *Yes*, replied the *Prophet*, *there is* : *For thou shalt be delivered into the Hand of the King of Babylon*. But (added he) what (or wherein) have I offended against thee, or against thy Servants, or against this People, that ye have put me in Prison ? I told you indeed, that the King of *Babylon* should come against this City and Land, and ye all see it is true : Where then are your *Prophets*, that *Prophefied* the contrary ? Yet if, notwithstanding my *Prophecy* is so apparently true, I must needs lie in Prison for it ; *Hear now, I pray thee, O my Lord the King, and let my Supplication be accepted by thee, that thou cause me not to return to the House of Jonathan, lest I die there*.

The King thereupon commanded that they should commit *Jeremiah* to the Court of the Prison (a more commodious place for him,) and that they should give him every day a *Piece of Bread* out of the *Baker's Street*, so long as there should be any Bread left in the City.

Fer. 38. While the *Prophet* remained in this Prison, where he could speak to the People, he ceased not to warn them of the Miseries that would inevitably come upon them, if they held out till the Place was taken : Telling them from the Lord, *This City shall surely be given into the hand of the King of Babylon's Army*, which shall take it ; and he that remaineth in this City, shall die by the Sword, by the Famine, and by the Pesteilence : But he that goeth forth to the *Chaldeans*, shall live ; for he shall have his Life for a Prey.

But when the *Princes* understood, that *Jeremiah* had spoken thus to the People, they went to the King, and besought him, that he might be put to death : Alledging, that by such Speeches, he weakned the hands of the Men of War that remained in the City, and indeed of all the People ; and that it was thereby evident, he sought not their Welfare, but their Hurt.

The King (not good in himself, and now in a streight, not in Condition to contest with his *Princes*) told them, *They might do what they would with him*. Whereupon, without more ado, they took *Jeremiah*,
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and cast him into the Dungeon, that was in the Court of the Prison, letting him down with Cords; and there being no Water, but much Mire, Jer. 38. in the place; the good Man sunk down, and stuck fast in the Mire.

Now had his Enemies got their desire: And there, in all likelihood, had this Holy Prophet perished, had not God raised up an Instrument for his Deliverance, such as was least to be expected.

There was in the King of Judah's Court, an Ethiopian, or Black-moor, called Ebed-melech; which Name imports, A Servant of the King; and he was indeed one of the King's Eunuchs. When this Man heard that they had put the Prophet into the Dungeon, he went boldly to the King (then sitting in the Gate of Benjamin) and said to him, My Lord, O King, These Men have done Evil, in all that they have done to Jeremiah the Prophet: For they have cast him into the Dungeon; where, besides all other Annoyances, he is like to die for Hunger.

The King then bidding Ebed-melech take with him from thence Thirty Men, and go take Jeremiah, the Prophet, out of the Dungeon, before he died: The noble Moor, taking with him the Men, went into the House under the Treasury, and taking from thence old cast Clouts and rotten Rags, let them down by Cords to Jeremiah into the Dungeon; advising him to fasten the Cords, so, as to prevent galling him. Which when the Prophet had done, the Men, whom Ebed-melech had brought him, drew him up by the Cords out of the Dungeon; and put him in the Court of the Prison again, where he had been a Prisoner before.

This kindness to his Prophet, the Lord so accepted, that while Jeremy was yet a Prisoner in the Court of the Prison, he commanded him to say to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, ' Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold, I will bring to pass my Words upon this City, for Evil, and not for Good, and thou shalt live to see them accomplished: But I will deliver thee in that Day, saith the Lord, and thou shalt not be delivered into the Hand of the Men whom thou fearest. For I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the Sword: But thy Life shall be given thee for a Prey, because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord.

After the Prophet Jeremiah was brought back from the Dungeon, to his former Prison, King Zedekiah sent for him to be brought to him, into the House of the Lord: And having him there by himself, desired him, not to hide any thing from him, of that whereof he should now ask him.

The Prophet having met with such hard usage, was willing now to make better Terms; especially seeing he was not under any constraint from the Lord, but was to answer the King's Request. Therefore, before he answered the King, he asked him, If he would promise not to put him to Death, in case what he should declare to him, should not please him? And whether, if he gave him Counsel, he would take it? To this latter, the King made no Reply: But to the former (relating to the Prophet's safety) the King swore to him by the Lord, (who having given him his Life, could take it away if he brake his Oath) that he would not put him to Death, nor deliver him to those who sought his Life.

Then, said the Prophet to the King, ' If thou surrender the City, and go forth to the King of Babylon's Princes, then thy Soul shall live, thou and thy House: And this City shall not be burnt with Fire. But if thou wilt not go forth unto the King of Babylon's Princes, then shall this City be given into the Hands of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with Fire: And thou shalt not escape out of their Hands.

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But, said the King, I am afraid of the *Jews* that are fallen to the *Chaldeans*, lest, if I should yield my self to the *Chaldeans*, they should deliver me to those *Jews*, to be mocked by them.

Nay, said the Prophet, 'Obey, I beseech thee, the Voice of the Lord, which I have spoken to thee; and I can assure thee the *Chaldeans* shall not deliver thee to those *Jews*, but it shall be well unto thee, and thy Soul shall live. But if thou refuse to go forth, this is the word which the Lord hath shewed me, All the *Women* that are left in the King of *Judah's* House (the Remainder of those that were carried away with *Jechoniah* and his Mother) shall be brought forth to the King of *Babylon's* Princes; and they shall discover how thy Friends have set thee on, and have prevailed against thee, and have now left thee in the Mire. So all thy Wives and thy Children shall be brought out to the *Chaldeans*; and thou thy self shalt not escape out of their Hand, but shalt be taken by the King of *Babylon*: And thou shalt be the Cause that this City shall be burnt with Fire.

The King having heard what the Prophet had to say, charged him, at parting, not to let any Man know what Discourse had passed between them, at the peril of his Life. But (said he) if the Princes should hear that I have talked with thee; and thereupon come and ask thee what thou hast said to me, and I to thee: Let them know thou didst present a *Petition* to me, that I would not send thee back to the Prison in *Jonathan's* House, to die there. Accordingly, when the Princes had heard that *Jeremiah* had been with the King, they came, and examined him what had passed between them: And he putting them off, as the King had directed him, the matter was not discovered.

Tho' the King carried it outwardly somewhat fair, excusing himself by some pretended *Necessities*, from following the Counsel which the Lord, by his Prophet, had often given him: Yet he was naught and false. Which made the Prophet *Ezekiel* break forth thus against him; O thou prophane, wicked Prince of Israel, whose Day is come, whose Iniquity shall have an end! Thus saith the Lord God, Remove the Diadem, and take off the Crown, &c. *Ezek.* 21. 25, 26.

The Prophet *Jeremiah* having often, on divers occasions, foretold the taking of *Jerusalem*, and the Destruction thereof, and that both King and People should go into Captivity: Now to perswade them, that they who should survive the determined time of that Captivity, should return, and possess their Land again; himself turned Purchaser, even while he was a Prisoner. For *Hanameel*, his Uncle *Shallum's* Son, coming to him in the Prison, and desiring him to buy of him his Field, which was in *Anathoth*, in the Country of *Benjamin* (the right whereof, by the Law of Inheritance, belonged to him, as being the next of Kin, *Levit.* 25.) the Prophet, knowing, that this thing was of the Lord's ordering, because the Lord had told him of it before, made no stick at it, but forthwith bought the Field, of his Cousin *Hanameel*, for Seventeen Shekels of Silver (which he paid by Weight, as the manner then was, not by Tale.) And having caused the Field to be conveyed to himself, by written Deeds, Signed, Sealed, and well Witnessed; he delivered those Purchase-Deeds, both the Original which was enrolled, and the Counterpart thereof, unto *Baruch*, his Scribe, in the presence of his Cousin *Hanameel*, and of the Witnesses that had subscribed them, and before all the *Jews* that sat in the Court of the Prison: Charging *Baruch*, before them all, that he should put those Evidences into an Earthen Vessel, that (being to be hid in the Ground, they might not be defaced or spoiled, but) might continue sound and whole for many Days.

Days. For said he, thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of *Israel*, *Houses, and Fields, and Vineyards shall be possessed again in this Land.* *Jer. 32.*

The *Siege of Jerusalem* had now continued long: And the *Provisions* in the City being by that means much spent, the *Famine*, which God by his Prophets had threatened them with, as one part of their Punishment, was now grown strong upon them. The Bread was so near spent, when *Ebed-Melech* took *Jeremiah* out of the *Dungeon*, that he thought there had been none left in the City then, *Jer. 38. 9.* But now there was none indeed. *Jer. 52. 6.* And so far did the *Famine* prevail, that *Ezekiel's* Prophecy may be supposed to have been then fulfilled upon them, That *the Fathers should eat their Sons, and the Sons their Fathers*, *Ezek. 5. 10.* To which also the Prophet *Jeremy* may be thought to have had reference; when, recounting some of the Calamities which the People endured, he said, *The Tongue of the sucking-child cleaveth to the Roof of his Mouth for Thirst. The young Children ask Bread, and no Man breaketh it to them. They that did feed delicately, are desolate in the Streets. They that were brought up in Scarlet, embrace Dung-hills (are fain to rake in the Dung-hills for Food.) The Hands of the pitiful Women have solden their own Children: They were their Meat, in the Destruction of the Daughter of my People, Lam. 4. ver. 4, 5. 10.*

When the *Besieged* were brought, through their own *Obstinacy*, to these *Extremities*, the City at length was taken by storm, on the Ninth Day of the Fourth Month, in the Eleventh Year of *Zedekiah's* Reign; the *Chaldeans*, after a *Siege of Eighteen Months*, winning the middle Gate, and the Princes of the King of *Babylon* taking possession of it. A. M. 3420.

As soon as King *Zedekiah*, and his Men of War, saw the *Chaldeans* had forced the Gate, and were got into the City, they all fled; and leaving the City by Night, went out by the way of the Gate which was by the King's Garden, between the Two Walls: And the King took the way towards the Plain. But the *Chaldean* Army lying round about the City, they that were on that side where the King went out, pursuing after him, overtook him in the Plains of *Jericho*; and all his Army being scattered from him, they took the King, and brought him up to the King of *Babylon*, at *Riblah* in the Land of *Hamath*: Where he gave Judgment upon him.

And in the first place he slew the Sons of *Zedekiah* before his Eyes. Then he slew also the Princes of *Judah*, who had with-held the King from hearkening to the Prophet, and yielding himself, as the Lord required: And when he had punished *Zedekiah* with these terrifying sights, he put out his Eyes, and binding him in Fetters of Brass, carried him, so bound, to *Babylon*; where he kept him in Prison to the Day of his Death.

The City thus taken, the King a Captive, the Princes and Nobles, most of them slain; and the Men of War fled: The next thing was to take the Plunder, and destroy the Place. To that end, soon after came *Nebuzaradan*, Captain of the Guards, or Marshal to the King of *Babylon*, and having broken down the Walls of *Jerusalem*, he burnt the House of the Lord, and the King's House, and all the great Men's Houses, and destroyed the City with Fire. *Jer. 39. and 40.*

Then taking the Residue of the People, that yet remained in the City, together with those that during the Siege, had yielded themselves to the *Chaldeans*, he sent them Prisoners to *Babylon*: Leaving only some of the Poor of the Land, for Vine-dressers, and for Husbandmen; unto whom he gave Vineyards and Fields to Till.

The Riches of the Temple he sent also to *Babylon*, and therewith *Se- Chap. 52.*
rajah the Chief-Priest, and *Zephaniah* (his Suffragan) the second Priest,

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with some of the *Door-keepers*. Some *Prime Men* also, whom he found in the City (who belike wanted either *Opportunity* or *Courage* to attempt an *Escape*) he took and brought to the King of *Babylon* at *Riblah*, who caused them to be put to Death there. Among these was an *Eunuch* that had the Charge of the Men of War, and the *Muste-Master-General* of the King of *Judah's* Army, with some others, that were Officers near the King's Person.

The King of *Babylon*, having understood what Pains the Prophet *Jeremiah* had taken to bring the King of *Judah* and his Princes to a timely Surrender, and what Hardships he had undergone for so doing, had given a strict Charge to *Nebuzaradan*, to have an especial Regard to the Prophet; and not only to take Care, that he suffered no harm, but to do for him whatsoever he himself should desire.

Jer. 40. *Nebuzaradan* therefore, with the Princes of the King of *Babylon*, sent to fetch *Jeremiah* from the Prison to them. But having (through forgetfulness, or much Business) slipt the season; they who had the Charge of Transporting the Captives, had taken him, it seems, among the rest, and carried him away in Chains, as far as *Ramah*. From thence therefore they sent for him back; and when he was come, *Nebuzaradan* thus spake unto him.

' The Lord thy God, who pronounced this Evil upon this Place, hath
' now brought it, and done according as he had said. Because ye have
' sinned against the Lord, and have not obeyed his Voice, therefore is
' this Thing come upon you. But now, behold, I loose thee from the
' Chains which were upon thine Hand: And if it seem good unto
' thee to come with me into *Babylon*, Come, and I will provide well
' for thee. But if thou hadst rather tarry here, behold all the Land is be-
' fore thee: Go whithersoever thou hast a mind to go. Then giving him
some Provisions and a Present, he kindly dismiss the Prophet: Who understanding by *Nebuzaradan*, that the King of *Babylon* had made *Gedaliah* (the Son of *Abikam*, and Grandson of *Shaphan*) Governor of the Land, he went to him by *Nebuzaradan's* Advice, and dwelt with him at *Mizpah*, among the People that were left in the Land.

When the Captains of King *Zedekiah's* Forces (which fled with him, upon the taking of the City, and were scattered and dispersed about the Country) understood that the King of *Babylon* had made *Gedaliah* Governor over the Land of *Judah*, and had committed to his Care and Charge the People of all Ranks, that remained in the Land, they came with their Men to *Mizpah*, and submitted themselves to him.

Among these were *Ishmael* (who was of the King's Seed) *Johanan* and *Jonathan* (two Brothers) *Serajah*, and divers other principal Commanders: Whom, with their Men, *Gedaliah* the Governor took into his Protection, on condition they should be subject to the King of *Babylon*. And letting them know that he would keep his Court at *Mizpah* (that he might be near the *Chaldeans*, to correspond with them, and receive Orders from them :) he left them at liberty to settle themselves in any of the Cities they liked; and to store themselves with Wine, Oyl, and Summer-Fruits, for a Winter-Provision.

The Jews also, that in the common danger, had fled for safety to the *Moabites*, *Ammonites*, *Edomites*, and into other Countries, when they heard that the King of *Babylon* had left a Remnant of *Judah* in the Land, and had set their own Country-man, *Gedaliah*, over them, returned to the Land of *Judah* again; and having presented themselves before Governour *Gedaliah* at *Mizpah*, were by him dismissed to their *Vintage*, and *Harvest*.

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But *Ishmael*, stomaching it, that *Gedaliah* (who was but a private Person) should not only be preferred before him (who was of the Blood ^{*Fer. 41.*} Royal) but set over him as Governor; and imparting his *Discontent* to half a score more, who were of the Princes of *Judah*, and who also thought it beneath them to be under *Gedaliah*, they conspired against him; being animated thereunto by the King of the *Ammonites*.

This *Conspiracy*, *Johanan*, one of the Captains, having got knowledge of, went and discovered it to *Gedaliah*; desiring him to give him leave to slay *Ishmael*. But *Gedaliah* being a Man of great worth, and of an honourable mind, not apt to entertain Suspicions of others, would not believe that *Ishmael* was Treacherous; much less give way to so dishonourable an Act, as to have him slain privately.

It was not long after, that *Ishmael*, with the other ten Princes of *Judah*, who had escaped the Slaughter and Captivity, came to *Mizpah*, on pretence of waiting on the Governor *Gedaliah*, and were kindly received and entertained by him. But they, watching an Opportunity, drew their Swords, and setting upon *Gedaliah*, slew him. And, that his Death might not be revenged upon themselves, they, with their *Retinue*, taking the People of *Mizpah* at an advantage (who, suspecting no danger, were unprovided for Defence) fell suddenly upon them too, and slew not only the *Jews*, but the *Chaldeans* also, who were there with *Gedaliah*.

This Murther and Massacre they kept so private, that the second day after, it was not known abroad: By which means about Fourscore Men of the Israelites fell also into *Ishmael's* hands. These, coming from *Shechem*, *Shiloh*, and *Samaria*, were going to *Jerusalem*, to carry Offerings and Incense to the House of the Lord; which it is supposed they had not heard was destroyed, when they came from home.

Their way lying by *Mizpah*, *Ishmael* seeing them, went forth to meet them; and that he might the more easily draw them, into his Snare, by conforming himself to their Condition, whom he observed to be in deep Mourning, (for they had not only rent their Cloaths, after they had heard of the Destruction of the holy City and Temple, but had shaved their Beards also, and cut themselves, which were two Heathenish Practices they had learned from their Neighbours, contrary to the Law, *Levit. 19. 27, 28.*) he, Crocodile-like, went weeping to them: And, that he might sound their Affection to the Governor; Invited them to come into *Mizpah* to *Gedaliah*.

But when he had by this Train drawn them into the City, he fell upon them, and slew them all, except ten Men. They, by acquainting him that they had Treasures (or Stores, of Wheat, Barly, Oyl, and Honey) in the Field, escaped his hands, and saved their lives.

The dead Bodies he cast into a Pit (which *Asa* King of *Judah* had made, for fear of *Baasha* King of *Israel*:) And then taking with him, as Captives, the rest of the People that were in *Mizpah*, (among whom were King *Zedekiah's* Daughters) he departed from thence to go over to the *Ammonites*, whose King had put him upon this Treacherous and bloody Enterprize.

But before he could get out of the Country, the Report of these barbarous Murthers coming to *Johanan*, and the rest of the Captains of *Zedekiah's* Forces, which had put themselves under *Gedaliah's* command; they drew forth their Men, and marched against *Ishmael*, whom they found by the great Waters in *Gibeon*, called the Pool of *Gibeon*; where *Abner* and *Joab*, falling from Jest to Earnest, had long before had a fore Battle, 2 *Sam. 2.*

Glad were the poor Prisoners, whom *Ishmael* had brought with him from *Mizpah*, when they saw *Johanan*, and the rest of the Captains, with their Forces coming to rescue them; and wheeling off, they went and joyned themselves to *Johanan*. Which when *Ishmael* saw, not daring to stand the Shock, he, with eight Men only in his Company, escaped by flight to the *Ammonites*.

Ishmael, thus gone, *Johanan* and the rest of the Captains, taking with them all the People whom they had recovered from *Ishmael*, went and dwelt in the Habitation of *Chimham* near *Bethlehem*; (a Place supposed, from 2 *Sam.* 19. 38. to have been anciently given by King *David* to *Chimham*, the Son of old *Barzillai* the *Gileadite*, and yet bore his Name, near Five hundred years after.)

That Place they chose the rather, that if they should be pursued by the *Chaldeans*, they might the more readily take Refuge in *Egypt*; for they were afraid that the *Chaldeans* would fall upon them, and cut them off; because *Ishmael* had slain *Gedaliah*, the King of *Babylon's* Governor, and some of the *Chaldeans* also.

Jer. 42. Among these whom *Ishmael* had led Captive from *Mizpah*, and who were rescued by *Johanan*, the Prophet *Jeremiah* (we may well conclude) was one: For we read he went to dwell with *Gedaliah* at *Mizpah*, *Jer.* 40. 6. and we find him now among the People, at their new Quarters, in the Habitation of *Chimham*, Chap. 42. 1, 2. For there *Johanan* and *Jeremiah*, with the rest of the Captains, and all the People great and small, coming near to the Prophet, thus bespake him: 'Let, we beseech thee, our Supplication be accepted before thee, and pray thou for us unto the Lord thy God, that he may shew us the way wherein we should walk, and the thing we should do. Thus, altho' for their safety, they had pitched near the Borders of *Egypt*, they pretended they would not dispose of themselves, without the Lord's direction.

The Prophet promised them, that he would both pray unto the Lord their God for them; and would faithfully return them the Answer which the Lord should give to their Request, without hiding any thing from them. And they thereupon entred into a Solemn Covenant for their Obedience, saying to the Prophet, *The Lord be a true and faithful Witness between us, if we do not according to all things, according to which the Lord shall send thee unto us; whether it be Good or Evil* (that is, whether it please us, or not) *we will obey the Voice of the Lord our God, to whom we send thee, that it may be well with us, when we obey his Voice.*

The Prophet thereupon supplicating the Lord on their behalfs, enquired of him, how he would have them dispose themselves: But the Lord, who saw the naughtiness of their Hearts, was not forward to give an Answer; so that ten Days were past before the Prophet received an Answer from the Lord. But when he had received it, he called *Johanan*, with the rest of the Captains, and all the People together, and told them, 'Thus saith the Lord, the God of *Israel*, unto whom ye sent me, to present your Supplication before him; If ye will still abide in this Land, then will I build you, and not pull you down; and I will plant you, and not pluck you up: For I repent me of the Affliction that I have brought upon you. And whereas ye are afraid of the King of *Babylon*, be not afraid of him, saith the Lord; for I am with you to save you, and to deliver you from his Hand; and I will shew Mercy unto you, that he (seeing the Favour I have for you) may have Mercy upon you, and cause you to return to your own Land

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‘ But if ye say, We will not dwell in this Land, but we will go into the Land of *Egypt*, where we shall see no War, nor hear the Sound of *Jer. 43.* the Trumpet, nor have *Hunger of Bread*, and there we will dwell: Then it shall come to pass that the *Sword*, which ye feared, shall overtake you there, in the Land of *Egypt*; and the *Famine*, whereof ye were afraid, shall follow close after you there, in *Egypt*, and there ye shall die. So shall it be with all the Men, that set their Faces to go into *Egypt*, to Sojourn there; they shall die by the *Sword*, by the *Famine*, and by the *Pestilence*; and none of them shall remain, or escape from the Evil, that I will bring upon them. For thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of *Israel*, As mine Anger, and my Fury hath been poured forth upon the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*; so shall my Fury be poured forth upon you, when ye shall enter into *Egypt*; and ye shall be an *Execration*, and an *Astonishment*, and a *Curse*, and a *Reproach*, and ye shall see this Place no more.

When the Prophet had thus delivered to the People the Mind of the Lord, *Azariah* (who was called *Jezaniah* before, *Chap. 42. 1.*) with *Johanan*, and all the proud Men of their Party, did in effect give him the Lie. For they said to *Jeremiah*, *Thou speakest falsely*; the Lord our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into *Egypt*, to Sojourn there. But *Baruch*, the Son of *Neriah*, setteth thee on against us, to deliver us into the Hand of the *Chaldeans*, that they might carry us away Captives into *Babylon*, and might put us to Death there.

The Prophet thereupon, in Defence and Confirmation of what he had before delivered to them from the Lord; and in Testimony against them, added, ‘ The Lord hath said concerning you, O ye Remnant of *Judah*, Go ye not into *Egypt*: And I have faithfully Admonished you this Day. For ye dissembled in your Hearts, when sending me unto the Lord your God, ye said, Pray for us unto the Lord our God; and according to all that the Lord our God shall say, so declare unto us: And we will do it. And now I have declared it to you: But ye have not obeyed the Voice of the Lord your God, nor any Thing for which he hath sent me to you. Now therefore know certainly, that ye shall die by the *Sword*, by the *Famine*, and by the *Pestilence*, in the place whither ye desire to go to sojourn, *Chap. 42. 19, &c.*

Notwithstanding this, they would not obey the Voice of the Lord, to dwell in the Land of *Judah*: But *Johanan*, and the other Captains of the Forces, taking all the Remnant of *Judah*, Men, Women and Children, with the late King’s Daughters, and the good Prophet *Jeremiah*, with *Baruch* his Scribe (full fore against their Two Wills) carried them out of the Land of *Judah*, and brought them into the Land of *Egypt*.

As soon almost as they were settled in *Egypt*, the Lord commanded the Prophet *Jeremiah*, for a Typical Confirmation of their Destruction, to take great Stones in his Hands, and hiding them in the Clay, in the Brickiln, at the Entry of *Pharaoh’s* House in *Tahpanes*, in the sight of the Men of *Judah*, and say to them; ‘ Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of *Israel*, Behold, I will send and take my Servant *Nebuchadnezzar*, King of *Babylon*, and will set his Throne upon these Stones which I have hid: And he shall spread his Royal Pavilion over them. And when he cometh he shall smite the Land of *Egypt*; and shall deliver to Death, such as are appointed for Death; and to Captivity, such as are for Captivity; and to the *Sword*, such as are for the *Sword*. And I will kindle a Fire in the Houses of the Gods of *Egypt*, and he shall burn them, and carry them away Captive: And he shall possess himself of the Land of *Egypt*, as easily as a Shepherd putteth on his (loose) Garments; and he shall go forth from thence in

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‘ Peace

Jer. 43. ' Peace, He shall break also the *Images of Beth-shemesh* (the House of the Sun) in the Land of *Egypt*; and the Houses of the Gods of the Egyptians shall be burn with Fire.

As these rebellious Jews had disobeyed the Lord, and disregarded his Prophet: So when they were settled in *Egypt*, they soon grew from bad to worse; worshipping strange Gods, and burning Incense to the *Queen of Heaven*. Which, when the Prophet *Jeremiah* reprov'd them for, in the Name, and by the express Command of the Lord; they made no Bones to tell him to his Face, ' As for the Word which thou hast spoken to us in the Name of the Lord, *We will not hearken to thee: But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own Mouth;* (that is, we will perform the Vows we have made) to burn Incense unto the *Queen of Heaven*, (by which is meant the *Moon*, at least, if not all the *Planets*) and to pour out Drink-offerings to her, as we have done, we and our Fathers, our Kings and our Princes, in the Cities of *Judah*, and in the Streets of *Jerusalem*: For then had we plenty of *Victuals*, and were well, and saw no Evil. But since we left off to burn Incense to the *Queen of Heaven*, and to pour out Drink-offerings unto her, we have wanted all Things, and have been consumed by the Sword, and by the Famine. Thus said the Men: To which the Women malapertly added; *When we burnt incense to the Queen of Heaven, and poured out Drink-offerings unto her, Did we do it without our Men?* As much as to say, *We fear not thy Threats: For we have our Husbands to stand by us in what we have done.*

This daring Answer provoked the Lord to denounce against them, by his Prophet, the most fearful Judgments, in the most certain Terms; adding, as a confirming Sign, that he would give *Pharaoh-Hophra*, King of *Egypt* (unto whom they had betaken themselves for Protection) into the Hand of his Enemies that fought his Life; as he had already, in their fight, given *Zedekiah* their King, into the Hand of *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*, who fought his Life.

The Prophet, having thus discharged his Duty to his own People, the Jews; address'd himself, in the rest of his Book, for the most part, to the Gentiles: As to *Egypt*, Jer. 46. To the *Philistines*, Chap. 47. To *Moab*, Chap. 48. To *Ammon*, *Edom*, and other People, Chap. 49. To *Babylon*, Chap. 50, and 51. with some Prophecies intermingled here and there, especially in Chap. 50. concerning the Redemption of *Israel*.

And as this good Prophet *Jeremiah* was thus exercised in *Egypt*: So was his Contemporary, the Prophet *Ezekiel*, as earnestly engaged in the like Service in *Chaldea*. Propheying against the *Ammonites*, Ezek. 25. Against *Tyrus*, Chap. 26. And against those that supported her, and traded with her, Chap. 27. Against the Prince of *Tyrus*, Chap. 28. Against *Egypt*, Chap. 29, 30, 31, and 32. Against the *Shepherds of Israel*, Chap. 34. Against *Mount Sier*, or *Edom*, Chap. 35. Against the *Lofly Ones of Israel*, Chap. 36. with a Promise of their Restoration to their own Land, by the Type of the dry Bones, Chap. 37. Against other Enemies of the Church of God, under the Name of *Gog* and *Magog*, Chap. 38, 39. And from thence, he describes the Rebuilding of the Temple; as a sure Confirmation to his Captive Country-men, that their Captivity should have an end, and they should return to their own Country.

Of the Deaths of these Two eminent Prophets, the Holy Scripture gives no Account, either as to Time, Place, or Manner. But others tell us, that the Prophet *Jeremiah* was stoned to Death in *Egypt* by the People; and we have reason to think it was done by his own People (the *Runnagade Jews* that fled to *Egypt*, against his Counsel and God's Command, and took him with them against his Will.) For the Egyptians,

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we are told, being freed by his Prayers, from those Water-Serpents (called *Crocodiles*) which infested them, had him in great Honour; which they testified by burying him in one of the Royal Sepulchres; as is delivered by *Jerom* in his Life, and by *Dorotheus* Bishop of Tyre, in his *Synopsis* of the Lives and Deaths of the Prophets and Apostles.

As for the Prophet *Ezekiel*, he is said to have been slain in *Chaldea*, by a Prince of the People of *Israel*, whom he reprov'd for worshipping Images. *Dorothei Synopsis*.

Toward the latter end of *Jeremiah's* and *Ezekiel's* Time, is the Prophet *Obadiab* placed by some. His Prophecy (which of all is the shortest) *Obadiab.* is directly against *Edom*, the Posterity of *Esau*; against whom both those other Prophets also denounced the Judgments of the Lord, *Jer.* 49. and *Ezek.* 25. and *Jeremy* almost in the same Words, *ver.* 14, 15, 16. But this Prophet *Obadiab* assigns the particular Cause why *Esau* should be cut off for ever, namely for his Violence against his Brother *Jacob*, *ver.* 10. *Jerom* in his Prologue to the Book of *Obadiab*, tells us, the *Hebrews* hold this Prophet *Obadiab* to be the same Man, who in the Days of *Ahab* King of *Israel*, hid and fed an Hundred of the Lord's Prophets, by Fifty in a Cave, to preserve them from the cruel Rage of persecuting *Jezebel*. But that carries in it no probability of Truth, unless this Prophet had lived much earlier: For from *Ahab's* time till this, is about Three Hundred Years.

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NOTES ON WORK

T H E
B O O K
Of the Prophet
D A N I E L.

TH E Prophet *Daniel* (whose Story next follows, and should have come somewhat sooner, but that I was unwilling to break the Course of *Jeremiah's* and *Ezekiel's* Story) was, before this time, grown into *Dan. 1.* great Favour in the *Babylonish* Court; and in great Fame among the *Chaldeans*. And was eminent in the Church of God, both for his *Piety*, and his *Wisdom*, *Ezek. 14. 14.* and *Chap. 28. 3.*

I noted before, that in the first Captivity of *Judah*, under *Jehoiakim* their King, *Daniel* being then but a Child, was carried to *Babylon*, among the Captives; with his Three peculiar Friends and Companions, *Hananiah*, *Misshael* and *Azariah*: Who being selected from among the rest, by *Ashpenaz* Master of the *Eunuchs*, had new Names given them, at the King's Command, as a Badge of their Slavery; *Daniel* being called *Belteshazzar*; *Hananiah*, *Shadrach*; *Misshael*, *Mesbach*; and *Azariah*, *Abednego*. And that they were trained up and instructed for Three Years time, in the Language and Learning of the *Chaldeans*, in order to fit them for the King's Presence and Service: The King allowing a daily Provision of Meat and Wine from his own Table, for their Sustenance and Encouragement.

But *Daniel*, proposing in his Heart, that he would not defile himself with the King's Meat or Wine (some of which perhaps might be *unclean in kind*, as others polluted by some *Superstitious Ceremonies* used upon them) requested of the Prince of the *Eunuchs*, that he might be excused from feeding thereon: And God had brought *Daniel* into so much Favour, and tender Love with the Prince of the *Eunuchs*, that he seemed willing to gratifie him in what he desired; only he objected the Danger he might incur from the King, if, for want of good Diet, *Daniel* and his Three Friends (for they were of the same mind with him therein) should look worse than their Fellows, when they should appear before the King.

But *Daniel* prevailed with *Melzar*, whom the Prince of the *Eunuchs* had set over him and his Companions, to give them only Pulse and Water for their Food; and prove them with that but for Ten Days: And deal with them afterwards as he should see Cause, upon comparing their Countenances with the Countenances of those others, that did eat of the Portion of the King's Meat.

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At the *Ten Days* end, when they came together, these *Conscientious Pulse-eaters* appeared fairer, and fatter in *Flesh*, than any of those others, who had fed on the *Royal Dainties*. Whereupon their *Purveyor* kept back, for the future, the Provision of *Meat and Wine*, which was allotted them; and left them to their desired *Pulse and Water*.

This their *Religious Abstinence and Self-denial*, was so acceptable to God, that he endued them with *Knowledge*, and *Skill* in all Learning and *Wisdom*; and furnished *Daniel* with *Understanding*, in *Visions and Dreams*: So that when, at the end of the *Three Years*, they were brought before the King, he communing with them, found them by far to excel, in *Wisdom*, and *Understanding*, all the *Magicians*, and *Astrologers* that were in his *Realm*.

Dan. 2.
A. M.
3426.

It was not long ere occasion was offered, for *Daniel* to give a *Specimen* of his *Skill*. For King *Nebuchadnezzar* had dreamed a *Dream*, which left an *Impression of Trouble* upon his *Spirit*; but when he awaked, he could not recollect the *Matter* of his *Dream*: He commanded the *Magicians, Astrologers, Sorcerers and Chaldeans*, (that is, those of the *Chaldeans*, who more especially pretended to *Divinations*) to be called, that they might shew him what the *Dream* was. They excused themselves from telling him the *Dream*: But readily offered to shew him the *Interpretation* of it, if he would tell them what it was that he had dreamed. That he told them, he could not; for the *Thing* was gone from him: And therefore he required them to tell him both the *Dream*, and the *Interpretation* thereof, upon pain of being cut in pieces, and their Houses made a *Dung-hill*, if they would not; yet promising them, that if they shewed him the *Dream*, and the *Interpretation* thereof, they should receive of him *Gifts and Rewards* and great *Honour*.

They answered him, just as they did before; *Let the King tell his Servants the Dream*, said they, *and we will shew the Interpretation of it*. The King, looking upon this to be but a sort of *Dodging* with him, replied, *I know certainly, that ye would gain time, because ye see the thing is gone from me*; but if ye will not make known the *Dream* to me, there is but *one Decree* for you: For ye have prepared *lying and corrupt Words* to speak before me, till the time be changed; therefore tell me the *Dream*, and by that I shall know that ye can shew me the *Interpretation* thereof.

The *Chaldeans* hereupon alledged for themselves, that that, which the King required of them, was a *rare thing*; such as *no Man* upon the *Earth* could shew, nor any except the *Gods only*, whose *Dwelling* is not with *Flesh* (that is, who are meer spiritual Beings:) And that no *King, Lord, or Ruler*, ever asked such a *Thing* of any *Magician, Astrologer or Chaldean*.

This put the King into such a *Rage*, that he gave *Command*, that all the *Wise-men* of *Babylon* (that is, they who professed *Magical Wisdom*) should be destroyed; and without more ado sent forth a *Decree*, that all those *Wise-men* should be slain: Whereupon *Daniel* and his *Three Friends*, were sought for, by the *undistinguishing Babylonians*, to be slain also among the *Magicians*.

But when *Daniel* heard of it, he wisely and considerately address'd himself to *Arioch*, the Captain of the King's Guard (or chief Marshal, unto whom the Slaughter of the *Wise-men* was committed) asking him, *Why the Decree from the King, for that Execution, was so hasty?* And having received from *Arioch* a more particular Account of the *Matter*, *Daniel* went in, and besought the King to give him *Time*, and he would shew him both the *Dream*, and the *Interpretation* of it.

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Having obtained some Time of the King, *Daniel* went to his House, and acquainted his Companions (*Hananiah*, *Misbael*, and *Azariah*,) with the whole Matter; that they might joyn with him in Prayer to the God of Heaven, that he would shew Mercy to them, in revealing this great Secret: That so they might not perish with the rest of the Wise Men of *Babylon*. And the Lord was pleased graciously to answer their Supplication; and to reveal the Secret to *Daniel*, in a Night-Vision. Dan. 2.

He therefore, having returned his Acknowledgment to God in an Hymn of Thanksgiving and Praise, went unto *Arioeh*, whom the King had commanded to destroy the Wise Men of *Babylon*; and desired him not to destroy any of them: But to bring him in before the King, and he would open to the King the Interpretation of his Dream.

Arioeh, glad, as it seems, to be excused from such bloody Work, made haste to bring *Daniel* to the King, Who presently asked him, If he was able to make known unto him the Dream which he had seen, and the Interpretation thereof.

Daniel thereupon told the King, That the Secret which he had demanded, was above the reach of all the Wise-men, Astrologers, Magicians, and Soothsayers, to open: But that there is a God in Heaven, that revealeth Secrets; who by this Dream would make known to him what should be in the latter Days.

Then modestly premising, that this Secret was not revealed to him, for any Wisdom that he had, more than others: But for the sakes of those, who might receive Benefit by the Interpretation thereof, and that he might understand the Thoughts of his Heart, he thus began to declare the Dream.

‘As for thee, O King, said he, when thy Thoughts came up into thy Mind upon thy Bed, concerning what should come to pass hereafter, thy Dream, and the Visions of thy Head, were these.

Thou sawest a great Image stand before thee, whose Brightness was excellent, but the Form thereof terrible. The Head of this Image was of fine Gold; his Breast and his Arms of Silver; his Belly and his Thighs of Brass; his Legs of Iron; his Feet, part of Iron, and part of Clay. Thou sawest till a Stone was cut out of the Mountain, without Hands, which smiting the Image upon the Feet, that were of Iron and Clay, brake them to pieces. And then was the Iron, the Clay, the Brass, the Silver and the Gold broken to pieces together, and became like the Chaff of the Summer Threshing-floor, and the Wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: And the Stone, that smote the Image, became a great Mountain, and filled the whole Earth.

This, said *Daniel*, is the Dream; and now will we tell the King the Interpretation thereof; which is this.

‘Thou, O King, art a King of Kings: For the God of Heaven hath given thee a Kingdom, Power, Strength and Glory; so that wheresoever the Children of Men dwell (an Hyperbolical Expression) the Beasts of the Field, and the Fowls of the Heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee Ruler over them all. Thou therefore art this Head of Gold. After thee (that is, after the Monarchy shall be ended, which thou hast erected) another Kingdom shall arise; as much inferior to thee, as Silver is to Gold. And after that, a Third Kingdom (Emblem’d by Brass) which shall bear Rule over all the Earth. But the Fourth Kingdom shall be strong as Iron; and shall bruise, and break in pieces the other Kingdoms; like as Iron breaks all the other Metals. And whereas thou sawest the Feet and Toes, part of Potter’s Clay, and part of Iron; the Kingdom shall be divided; and shall be partly strong; like the Iron; and partly broken and weak, as the Clay.

‘Clay. So that, altho’ they shall mingle themselves with the Seed of Men (thinking to strengthen themselves by Marriage-Alliances,) yet they shall not cleave firmly one to the other; even as Iron and Clay do not firmly mix.

‘But in the Days of these Kings, shall the God of Heaven set up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed. And that Kingdom shall not be left to other People; but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these Kingdoms; and it shall stand for ever.

‘And whereas thou sawest that the Stone, which broke in pieces the Iron, the Brass, the Clay, the Silver, and the Gold, was cut out of the Mountain without Hands: The great God hath made known to the King, what shall come to pass hereafter. For the Dream is certain, and the Interpretation thereof sure.

No sooner had Daniel thus opened the Dream, and the Interpretation thereof, but King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his Face, and worshipping Daniel, commanded that they should offer an Oblation, and Sweet Odours unto him. Which that Daniel refused, and instructed the King to direct his Devotions to God; may be gathered (tho’ it be not expressed) from the King’s answering, and saying to Daniel, *Of a Truth, your God is a God of Gods, and a Lord of Kings, and a Revealer of Secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this Secret.*

Then did the King make Daniel a great Man, even Ruler over the whole Province of Babylon, and Chief of the Governors over all the Wise Men of Babylon; and not only gave him many great Gifts, but, at his Request, set his three Friends (*Hananiab, Mishael, and Azariab*) over the Affairs of the Province of Babylon, under him; but Daniel himself sat in the Gate of the King; which is a Periphrasis of his being next in Authority to the King.

Dan. 3.
A. M.
3430. But after this (how long after, it is somewhat uncertain, probably about four Years,) this haughty King Nebuchadnezzar, puffed up with his Victories over the Jews, the Egyptians and others, (and perhaps more elevated in his own Thoughts of himself, from the Interpretation given to his Dream, whereby he was compared to the Golden Head of that terrible Image, which in his Sleep he had seen,) caused an Image, or Statue of Gold to be made, of an extraordinary Height and Bigness: For it was Threescore Cubits high (which, at the least, was Thirty Yards; the common Cubit containing half a Yard,) and six Cubits in Breadth.

This monstrous Image he set up in the Plain of Dura, in the Province of Babylon; and summoned the Princes, Governors, Captains, Judges, Treasurers, Counsellors, Sheriffs, and other Officers, to come to the Dedication of the Image: Who being Assembled together, and standing before the Image, an Herald made Proclamation thus.

‘To you it is commanded, O People, Nations and Languages, that whensoever ye shall hear the Sound of the Cornet, or Trumpet, and other Musical Instruments, ye shall fall down, and worship the Golden Image, which Nebuchadnezzar the King hath set up; upon pain of being cast into a burning Fiery Furnace.

Upon this Proclamation, and at the Sounding of the Musick, all the People that were present, of the several Nations and Languages, that were subject to Nebuchadnezzar, fell down and worshipped this Golden Image; the poor Captive Jews only excepted, who for Conscience sake were Dissenters.

Some of the Chaldeans observing that the Jews did not Conform to this Publick Worship, turned Informers against them, complaining of them to the King. And not thinking it adviseable to venture at first

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upon *Daniel*, who they knew was highest in the King's *Favour*; they Impeached *Shadrach*, *Mesbach* and *Abednego* (whom, for their Advancement in the Government, *they envied*,) telling the King that these three *Jews*, whom he had set over the Affairs of the Province of *Babylon*,^{Dan. 3.} regarded him not; they served not his Gods, nor worshipped the *Golden Image*, which he had set up.

Tho' *Nebuchadnezzar* was greatly enraged, that any should dare to disobey his Decree; yet, from an innate Principle of Natural Justice, he would not condemn them unheard. Therefore he gave Command, that they should be brought before him: And being brought, he himself examined them, saying, *Is it true, O Shadrach, Mesbach and Abednego, that is charged against you? Do ye not serve my Gods? nor worship the Golden Image, which I have set up?* Then taking for granted that they did not, and intending to give them this for a Warning, he added; *If for the future ye be ready, at the Sound of the Musick, to fall down, and worship the Image which I have made, well and good; but if ye do not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery Furnace; And who is that God (added this impious King) that shall deliver you out of my hands?*

So presumptuous a Speech, struck these good Men with a greater Abhorrence of the Idol. Wherefore they boldly told the King, They were not careful to answer him in that matter. For if it be so (said they) that thou shouldst be suffered to cast us into the fiery Furnace; our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from being hurt therein; and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King. But if he would not, be it known unto thee, O King, That we will not serve thy Gods, nor worship the Golden Image, which thou hast set up.

This resolute Answer put *Nebuchadnezzar* into such a Fury, that the Form of his Countenance was changed; and in his Heat giving Order that the Furnace should be heated seven times hotter than ordinary, he Commanded some of the strongest Men in his Army, to bind *Shadrach*, *Mesbach* and *Abednego*, and cast them into the fiery Furnace.

Accordingly, the Soldiers bound them (in their Cloaths, even with their Hats on) and cast them into the flaming Furnace. And tho' the Heat was so violent, that it flew them that cast them in; yet they falling down bound into the midst of the burning fiery Furnace, had no harm; but there Bands loosing there, they walked in the midst of the Fire.

This marvellous Sight so astonished King *Nebuchadnezzar*, (who to satiate his Revenge, was present at this barbarous Execution) that, rising up in haste, he said to his Officers, *Did not we cast Three Men bound into the midst of the Fire?* which they confirming, Lo (said he) I see Four Men loose, walking, without hurt, in the midst of the Fire; and the Form of the Fourth is like the Son of God.

Then coming nearer (as near as he durst) to the Mouth of the Furnace, he spake to *Shadrach*, *Mesbach* and *Abednego*, saying, *Ye Servants of the most high God, Come forth, and come hither.* Whereupon they came forth out of the midst of the Fire; and the Princes, Governors and Captains, with the King's Counsellors, and other Spectators, as well as the King himself, saw that the Fire had no Power upon their Bodies; for not an Hair of their Heads was singed, neither were their Coats discoloured; nor had they so much as the Smell of Fire upon them.

The King thereupon, being not only filled with Admiration, but struck, as it were, with a sudden Pang of Devotion, brake forth in this manner, *Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Mesbach and Abednego; who hath sent his Angel, and delivered his Servants, that trusted in him: Who not-*

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withstanding the King's Threats, have yielded up their Bodies to the Flames, rather than they would serve or worship any other God, than their own God. Therefore (said he) *I make a Decree, That every People, Nation and Language, which shall speak any thing amiss, against the God, of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their Houses shall be made a Dung-hill; because there is no other God, that can deliver after this sort.*

Then the King promoted *Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego* in the Province of *Babylon*: Which, no doubt, was a great *Disappointment*, and Trouble to those, that envied them for their Preferment before.

Dan. 4.
A. M.
3436.

After this, King *Nebuchadnezzar*, being at rest (from all his Enemies) and *Flourishing* in his *Palace*, had another *Dream*, which frightened him; and his Musings afterwards about it, troubled him.

This was not so difficult a Case, as the former; for then he had quite forgot his Dream; but now he so well remembered it, that he could give a distinct Account of it. And because his *Magicians* had told him before, that if he would relate his Dream to them, they would not fail to shew him the *Interpretation* of it; he, holding it needless to trouble *Daniel* again, sent for the *Wise Men of Babylon*, (which general Title comprehended all the *Magicians, Astrologers, Chaldeans, Diviners and Soothsayers*) and told his *Dream* to them. But they were all at a loss again; and could no more tell him the *Meaning* of this Dream, than they could tell him the *Dream it self before*: So that at last, to their Shame, *Daniel* was fain to be sent for again.

Daniel being come in before him, the King, by way of Introduction to the Matter, thus spake unto him. 'O *Belteshazzar*, (for that was the Name the *Prince of the Eunuchs* had at first given him, answerable to the Name of *Nebuchadnezzar's God*) 'Master of the *Magicians* (so the King had made him, Chap. 2. 48.) 'Because I know that the Spirit of the Holy Gods is in thee; and that therefore no Secret is too hard for thee, to trouble thee; tell me the *Visions* of my Dream which I have seen, and the *Interpretation* thereof. Then proceeding to relate the Dream, he said, 'Thus were the *Visions* of my Head upon my Bed.

'I saw, and behold, a Tree in the midst of the Earth, and the Height thereof was great. The Tree grew, and was strong; and the Height thereof reached to Heaven; and the Sight thereof to the end of all the Earth. The Leaves thereof were fair, and the Fruit thereof much; and in it was Meat for all. The Beasts of the Field had shadow under it, and the Fowls of the Heaven dwelt in the Boughs thereof; and all Flesh was fed of it. I saw also, in the Visions of my Head upon my Bed, and behold, a Watcher, and an Holy One, (or an Holy Watcher, or Angel) came down from Heaven; and crying aloud, said thus, Hew down the Tree, and cut off his Branches, shake off his Leaves, and scatter his Fruit: Let the Beasts get away from under it, and the Fowls from his Branches. Nevertheless, leave the Stump of his Roots in the Earth, even with a Band of Iron and Brass, in the tender Grass of the Field: And let it be wet with the Dew of Heaven, and let his Portion be with the Beasts in the Grass of the Earth. Let his Heart be changed from Man's; and let a Beast's Heart be given unto him: And let Seven Times pass over him. This matter is by the Decree of the Watchers; and the Demand by the Word of the Holy Ones: To the intent that the Living may know, That the Most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of Men.

'This (said *Nebuchadnezzar*) is the Dream that I have seen. And now do thou, O *Belteshazzar*, declare the *Interpretation* thereof: For
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‘all the *Wise Men* of my Kingdom are not able to do it; but thou art *Dan. 4.*
 ‘able, because *the Spirit of the Holy Gods is in thee.*

When *Daniel* had heard this Dream, he stood astonished for about the space of an Hour; and his *Thoughts* troubled him: Not so much from the *Difficulty* of interpreting the Dream; as for the *fearful Judgment*, which he saw was portended by it to the King. This *Consternation* in him the King observing, said to *Daniel*, *Let not the Dream, nor the Interpretation thereof, trouble thee: But declare it freely, and without Fear, be it what it will.*

‘My Lord, (replied *Daniel*) I wish this *inauspicious Dream* might belong to them that hate thee; and the *Interpretation* thereof to *thine Enemies.*

‘For the *Tree* that thou sawest, which grew and was strong, whose *Height* reached unto the Heaven, and the *Sight* thereof to all the *Earth*; whose *Leaves* were fair, and whose *Fruit* much, so that in it was *Meat* for all; under which the *Beasts* of the Field dwelt, and upon whose *Branches* the *Fowls* of the Heaven had their *Habitation*: *It is thou, O King, who art grown, and become strong; for thy Greatness is grown and reacheth unto Heaven; and thy Dominion to the end of the Earth. And whereas thou sawest a Watcher, and an Holy One, coming down from Heaven, and saying, Hew the Tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the Stump of the Roots thereof in the Earth, even with the Band of Iron and Brasses, in the tender Grass of the Field, and let it be wet with the Dew of Heaven, and let his Portion be with the Beasts of the Field, till Seven Times pass over him: This is the Interpretation, O King: And this is a Decree of the Most High, which is come upon my Lord the King. They shall drive thee from Men; and thy Dwelling shall be with the Beasts of the Field; and they shall make thee to eat Grass as Oxen; and they shall wet thee with the Dew of Heaven: And Seven Times shall pass over thee, till thou knowest that the Most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. And whereas they commanded to leave the Stump of the Tree Roots; It shews the Kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the Lord of Heaven doth rule.*

‘And (now said *Daniel*) that I have shewed thee the Interpretation of thy Dream, *Let my Counsel, O King, be acceptable to thee; which is, That thou break off thy Sins by Righteousness, and thine Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the Poor* (meaning perhaps, the poor Captives, his Brethren the *Jews*;) ‘if it may be a lengthening of thy *Tranquility.*

It was not long, before the *Judgment* fore-shewed by this Dream, was executed upon King *Nebuchadnezzar*. For at the end of *Twelve Months*, as he was walking in his *Royal Palace* at *Babylon*, he vauntingly said, *Is not this great Babylon, which I have built for the House of the Kingdom, by the Might of my Power, and for the Honour of my Majesty!*

Scarce was the Word out of his Mouth, when a *Voice from Heaven* was heard to say, *Unto thee, O King Nebuchadnezzar, it is spoken; The Kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from Men, and thy Dwelling shall be with the Beasts of the Field. They shall make thee to eat Grass as Oxen, and Seven Times shall pass over thee; until thou knowest that the Most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. And thereupon was he, in the same Hour, driven from the Company of Men; and did eat Grass as Oxen: And his Body was wet with the Dew of Heaven, till his Hairs were grown like Eagles Feathers, and his Nails like Birds Claws.*

Thus

A. M.
3437.

Dan. 4. Thus was this *haughty* King punished for his *presumptuous Pride*. But at the end of the Days (appointed as well for his *Instruction* as his *Correction*) lifting up his Eyes to Heaven (from whence he had by this time learned his only Help must come) his *Understanding returned* unto him; and then he Blessed the Most High, and praised and honoured him that liveth for ever: Whose Dominion he now acknowledged to be an *everlasting Dominion*, and his Kingdom from Generation to Generation. And that all the Inhabitants of the Earth are justly reputed as nothing in comparison of him; who in the *Army* of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, doth according to his Will: And none can stay his Hand; or say unto him, What dost thou?

A. M. When therefore his *Reason was restored unto him*, and he was qualified for Government again; his Princes and Counsellors (the same, perhaps, that had deposed him) fought unto him: And he was re-established in his Kingdom; and *excellent Majesty* was added unto him.

3444.

And then, as an *Acknowledgment*, both of his own great Sin, and God's greater Mercy to him, he published a Declaration, directed

TO ALL PEOPLE, NATIONS AND LANGUAGES,
THAT DWELL IN ALL THE EARTH.

Wherein, having premised that he thought it good to shew, or set forth the *Signs and Wonders*, which the High God had wrought towards him, he related the whole Course of the Matter at large (to wit, the *Dream*, the *Interpretation* of it, and the *Fulfilling* thereof upon him, as is before expressed) and then concluded,

Now I Nebuchadnezzar do Praise, Extoll and Honour the King of Heaven: All whose Works are Truth, and his Ways Judgment: And those that walk in Pride (as I did) he is able to abase.

Of the *Time* or *Manner* of this King's *Death*, we have not any Account in the Holy Scriptures.

He is supposed not to have lived long after his *Restoration*: But to have left his Throne to his Son *Evil Merodach*; who is thought to have supplied his Place in the Government, during the time that he *conversed with the Beasts*.

2 Kin. 25. This King *Evil Merodach*, when he came to have the Government entirely in his own Hands, took Compassion of *Jehoiachin* King of *Judah*,
Jer. 32. and released him from his Imprisonment, in the Seven and Thirtieth
A. M. Year of his Captivity: And treating him kindly, not only changed his
3446. Prison-Garments, and assigned him a constant daily Allowance, for his own Maintenance, during his Life; but gave him the *Precedence* of all the other Kings his Subjects, that were with him in *Babylon*.

This is all the Account we have in *Sacred History*, of this King, *Evil Merodach*: To whom succeeded his *Voluptuous Son*, *Belshazzar*.

In his *First Year* it was, that *Daniel* had his *Dream and Vision* of the *Four Beasts*, representing the *Four Monarchies*, related in his 7th Chapter. And in the *Third Year* of his Reign, *Daniel* had that *remarkable Vision* of the *Ram* and the *He-goat*, with the Interpretation thereof, set forth in Chapter 8. to which Two Chapters I refer the Reader, for a particular Account of each.

After which (tho' the Relation of it is placed before) this *Luxurious King*, making a great Feast to a Thousand of his Lords, commanded to have thee Golden and Silver *Vessels* (which his Grandfather *Nebuchadnezzar*, had taken out of the Temple at *Jerusalem*) brought forth,

forth, that *he* and his *Princes*, with his *Wives* and *Concubines*, might *drink Wine* therein: Which accordingly was done. And (altho' as other *Dan. 5.* Histories inform us, the City was at that time *straitly besieged*) they *caroused*, and drank Wine: And in their Cups, praised the Gods of Gold and of Silver, of Brass, of Iron, of Wood and of Stone.

But in the midst of this their *Prophane Revelling*, came forth the *Fingers of a Man's Hand*, and wrote upon the Plaister of the Wall of the King's Palace: And the King seeing the *part of the Hand* that wrote, was *struck* with so great *Amazement* and *Terror*, that his *Countenance* was *changed*, his *Joints loosed*, his *Knees smote* one against the other, and he was much troubled in his Mind concerning it.

Wherefore he called earnestly to have the *Astrologers*, *Chaldeans*, and *Sooth-sayers* brought in; that they might read that *Writing*, and shew him the *Interpretation* thereof: Promising that whosoever did it, should for his Reward be cloathed in *Scarlet*, wear a *Chain of Gold* about his Neck, and be the *Third Ruler* in the Kingdom. But alas! the King's *Wise Men* were in this case all *Fools*: For so far were they from shewing him the *Interpretation* of that *Writing*, that not one among them all could read it.

This put them all, both King and Lords, into so great a *Fright* and *Disorder*, that the old Queen, (probably the *Dowager* of King *Nebuchadnezzar*) hearing the Noise they made, came into the *Banqueting-House* among them; and saluting the King, said unto him, 'Let not thy Thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy Countenance be changed, on this Occasion: For there is a Man in thy Kingdom, *in whom is the Spirit of the Holy Gods*. And in the Days of thy Grandfather, *Light* and *Understanding*, and *Wisdom*, like the *Wisdom* of the Gods, being found in him, thy Grandfather *Nebuchadnezzar* made him *Master* of the *Magicians*, *Astrologers*, *Chaldeans* and *Sooth-sayers*. This is *Daniel*, whom the King named *Belteshazzar*. Wherefore let him be called, and he will both *read it*, and shew the *Interpretation*: For an *excellent Spirit*, with *Knowledge* and *Understanding* to *interpret Dreams*, to *unfold hard Sentences*, and *resolve Doubts*, hath been found in him.

Daniel hereupon being brought in, the King told him he had received a *fair Character* of him, for excellent *Wisdom* and *Understanding*, in giving *Interpretations*, and in *resolving Doubts*. Then laying open the *Inability* of his own *Wise Men*, he made *Daniel* an offer of the same Reward, which he had before made to them, in case he should read and interpret the *Writing*.

Daniel (not *churlishly*, but) *modestly* answered, *Let thy Gifts be to thy self* (or keep thy Gifts to thy self) *and give thy Rewards to another* (as much as to say, I expect not any Gift or Reward from thee:) *Yet I will read the Writing to the King, and make known to him the Interpretation.*

But before he would do that, he put the King in mind of the *Dealings of God* with his Grandfather, *Nebuchadnezzar*; thereby preparing him to see, and acknowledge the *Justice of God*, upon him and his House: And thus he began.

'O thou King, said he, the most High God gave *Nebuchadnezzar*, thy Grandfather, a Kingdom, and Majesty, and Glory, and Honour. And for the Majesty that he gave him, all People, Nations and Languages trembled, and feared before him. So great and absolute was his Power, that whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive: Whom he would he set up, and whom he would he put down. But when his Heart was lifted up, and his Mind hardened in Pride, he was deposed from his Kingly Throne, and they took his Glory from him.

D d d d d

'He

Dan. 5. * He was driven from the Sons of Men, and his Heart was made
 * like the Beasts; and his Dwelling was with the *Wild Affes*. He
 * was fed with Grass, like Oxen; and his Body was wet with the Dew
 * of Heaven: Till he knew that the most High God ruled in the
 * Kingdom of Men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he
 * will. And thou his Grandson, O *Belshazzar*, tho' thou knewest
 * all this, hast not humbled thine Heart; but hast lifted up thy self
 * against the Lord of Heaven. And at thy Command, thy Servants
 * have brought the *Vessels* of his House before thee; and thou and
 * thy Lords, thy Wives and thy Concubines, have drunk Wine in them.
 * And thou hast praised the Gods of Silver and Gold, of Brass, Iron,
 * Wood and Stone; which neither see, hear, nor understand: But the
 * God in whose Hand thy Breath is, and who has power over all thy ways,
 * hast thou not glorified. Then, or thereupon, the part of the Hand
 * (which thou hast seen) was sent from him; and this Writing (which
 * neither thou, nor any of thy wise Men can read) was written.
 Then read *Daniel* the Writing; which was this.

MENE MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.

And in the repeating it, putting *PERES*, instead of *UPHARSIN*, (as signifying the same) he thus interpreted the Words.

MENE, God hath numbred thy Kingdom (that is, the Term of thy Kingdom) and finished it.

The Doubling of which Word imports Certainty of the Thing.

TEKEL, Thou art weighed in the Ballances, and art found wanting.

PERES, Thy Kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

Tho' we cannot suppose *Belshazzar* was pleased with this Interpretation; yet we find he had so much Justice and Honour as to make good his Promise: For at his Command, they cloathed *Daniel* with Scarlet, and put a Chain of Gold (some perhaps would have put a Rope) about his Neck; and by Proclamation declared him the Third Ruler in the Kingdom.

But *Belshazzar's* Reign, after this, was but short. God, according to the Hand-writing, had numbred it, and finished it. For that very Night was *Belshazzar*, the King of the *Chaldeans*, slain by the Medes, that at that time besieged *Babylon*; who taking the advantage, while the *Chaldeans* had been thus Revelling, and were overcharged with Wine, to divide the River *Euphrates*, possessed themselves of the City, and surprized the Court: And *Darius* the Mede, being about sixty two years old (by the help of his Son-in-Law, the great *Cyrus*) took upon him the Kingdom.

Dan. 6. As soon as *Darius* was settled on the Throne, he appointed one hundred and twenty Princes to be over the whole Kingdom; and set Three Presidents over these, to whom they should give Account of Affairs; that the King might neither have Trouble, nor sustain Damage.

Of these Three Presidents, *Daniel* was the first, or had the chief Place. For because an excellent Spirit was observed to be in him, the King not only preferred him above the rest of the Presidents and Princes; but thought to set him over the whole Realm.

This begat high Emulation in the other Presidents and Princes; who grudging that *Daniel*, a Stranger, and a Captive, should be so great in the Royal Favour, to be thus raised above them, conspired to work his Ruin.

And.

And first they sought to find some occasion against him, concerning his publick *Administration* in the Government: But he was so faithful, and so *exactly careful* and diligent therein; that they could *Dan. 6.* find no fault, nor Error in him.

Whereupon, concluding they should find no occasion against him, *except it should be concerning the Exercise of his Religion*, in the Law of his God (wherein he differed and *dissented* from them,) they consulted together, how to *lay a Snare* for him in that respect. They knew he stood too fair in the *Favour*, and strong in the *Affection* of the King, to be directly struck at; therefore they contrived a way, to give him a *side blow*.

They went together *in a Body* to the King; and after the common Salutation, [*King Darius live for ever,*] they thus *Addressed* him.

‘ All the *Presidents* of the Kingdom, the *Governours* and the *Princes*,
‘ the *Counsellors* and the *Captains*, (the whole Estate, Civil and Military)
‘ have consulted together, to establish a *Royal Statute*, and to make a
‘ *firm Decree*; That whosoever shall ask a *Petition* of any God or Man,
‘ for Thirty Days, save of thee, O King, he shall be cast into the *Den*
‘ of *Lions*. Now therefore, O King, establish the *Decree*, and sign the
‘ *Writing*, that it be not changed, according to the Law of the *Medes*
‘ and *Persians*, which altereth not.

The King, misled at first, by a *false suggestion*, in the beginning, or *Preamble of the Bill*, That all the *Presidents*, (whereof *Daniel*, he knew, was one, and the *Chief*,) had agreed to it; and not suspecting any *subdolous Dealing*, but taking it for a *Testimony* of their great *Affection*, and high veneration for him, at his Entrance to the Throne; without any *Hesitation* consenting to their Request, forthwith *Signed this Bill for Conformity*; and thereby *passed it into a Statute*, or Decree.

When *Daniel* knew that the *Writing* was Signed, he went into his House; and (tho’ *Worldly Policy* might have suggested to him, that, since the Decree was but for *Thirty days*, he might, for *self-preservation* from so certain and cruel a Punishment, have *forborn Praying* for that time, *at least publickly*; and if he must needs Pray, have *Prayed so privately* in his Closet, that no Man should have been able to have convicted him; yet he) *not altering*, in the least, *his accustomed Course*, but kneeling upon his knees in his Chamber, with his *Windows open* towards *Jerusalem*, prayed three times a day, and gave thanks before his God, just as he was wont to do, before the Decree was made.

They who had set this *Trap* for him, were not wanting to *watch* him, that they might *inform against him*. And having quickly taken him *in the Act*, they went to the King; and having put him in mind of the Decree he had lately made, and drawn him to acknowledge that, according to the Law of the *Medes* and *Persians*, it was unalterable; they complained of *Daniel*, that he (who was but one of the Children of the Captivity of *Judah*) in *Contempt* of both the King, and the Law, had made his *Petition* three times a day, not to the King, but to his own God.

The King now *too late*, saw their Design; and being fore displeased (not only with them, but even) with himself, that he had been thus *over-reached* by them, he set himself heartily to save *Daniel* and laboured, ’till the going down of the Sun, to deliver him. But the *Conspiring Princes* held him to it. For they, being all assembled together, said to him, Know, O King, that the Law of the *Medes* and *Persians* is such, that no Decree, nor Statute which the King establisheth, may be changed.

The King therefore being fain, tho' very unwillingly, to yield to them, they brought *Daniel*; and (after the King unwittingly Prophe-
 Dan. 6. A. M. 3471. fying, had said unto him, *Thy God, whom thou serveſt continually, will deliver thee*) they caſt him into the Den of Lions; and for their ſatisfaction, that they might be aſſured, that neither the King, nor any of the People (to whom *Daniel*, for his great Wiſdom, Juſtice, and other Vertues, was very dear) might privately reſcue him; a Stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the Den; and Sealed not only with the King's own Signet (whom, in this caſe, they could hardly confide in,) but with the Signet of his Lords alſo.

Then went the *Sorrowful* King to his Palace; where he paſſed the Night in Faſting and Watching: And riſing very early in the Morning, went in haſt to the Den of the Lions. Whither being come, he cried with a lamentable voice unto *Daniel*; O *Daniel*, *Servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou ſerveſt continually, able to deliver thee from the Lions?*

Yes, O King, replied *Daniel*; *My God hath ſent his Angel, who hath ſhut the Lions mouths, that they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before him Innocency was found in me; and alſo before thee, O King, have I done no hurt.*

Exceeding glad was the King, that *Daniel* had been preſerved; and Commanded that he ſhould be taken up out of the Den. Which being done, the King commanded that *Daniel's* Accuſers ſhould be brought, and caſt into the Lions Den; they, with their Wives and Children; between whom and *Daniel* this difference quickly appeared; that whereas the Lions would not touch *Daniel*, they fell eagerly on theſe, and having the Maſtery of them, brake their very Bones in pieces, and that before they came to the bottom of the Den.

Upon this *Miraculous Deliverance* of *Daniel*, King *Darius* published the following Proclamation.

' TO ALL PEOPLE, NATIONS and LANGUAGES,
 ' that dwell in all the Earth, Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a
 ' Decree, That in every Dominion of my Kingdom, Men tremble and
 ' fear before the God of *Daniel*, for he is the living God, ſtedfaſt for
 ' ever. His Kingdom is that which ſhall not be deſtroyed, and his Do-
 ' minion ſhall remain unto the End. He delivereth and reſcueth; and
 ' he worketh Signs and Wonders in Heaven and in Earth; who hath de-
 ' livered *Daniel* from the Power of the Lions.

Chap. 9. In the firſt year of this King *Darius*, the Prophet *Daniel*, underſtand-
 ing by Books, the Number of the Years, concerning which, the word
 of the Lord had come to *Jeremiah* the Prophet, that he would accom-
 pliſh Seventy Years in the Deſolations of *Jeruſalem*, (*Jer.* 25. 12. and
 Chap. 29. 10.) And thereupon humbling himſelf with Faſting, and in
 Sackcloth and Aſhes, to ſeek the Lord by Prayer and Supplications,
 with Confefſion of Sins, particular and general; he was informed, by
 the Angel *Gabriel*, concerning the *Seventy Weeks*, and other *Mysterious*
Numbers. Which, tho' explained then to him, remain (at leaſt, ſome
 of them) *mysterious* ſtill to many; and need a *Gabriel* (a Man of God)
 to give the genuine meaning of them.

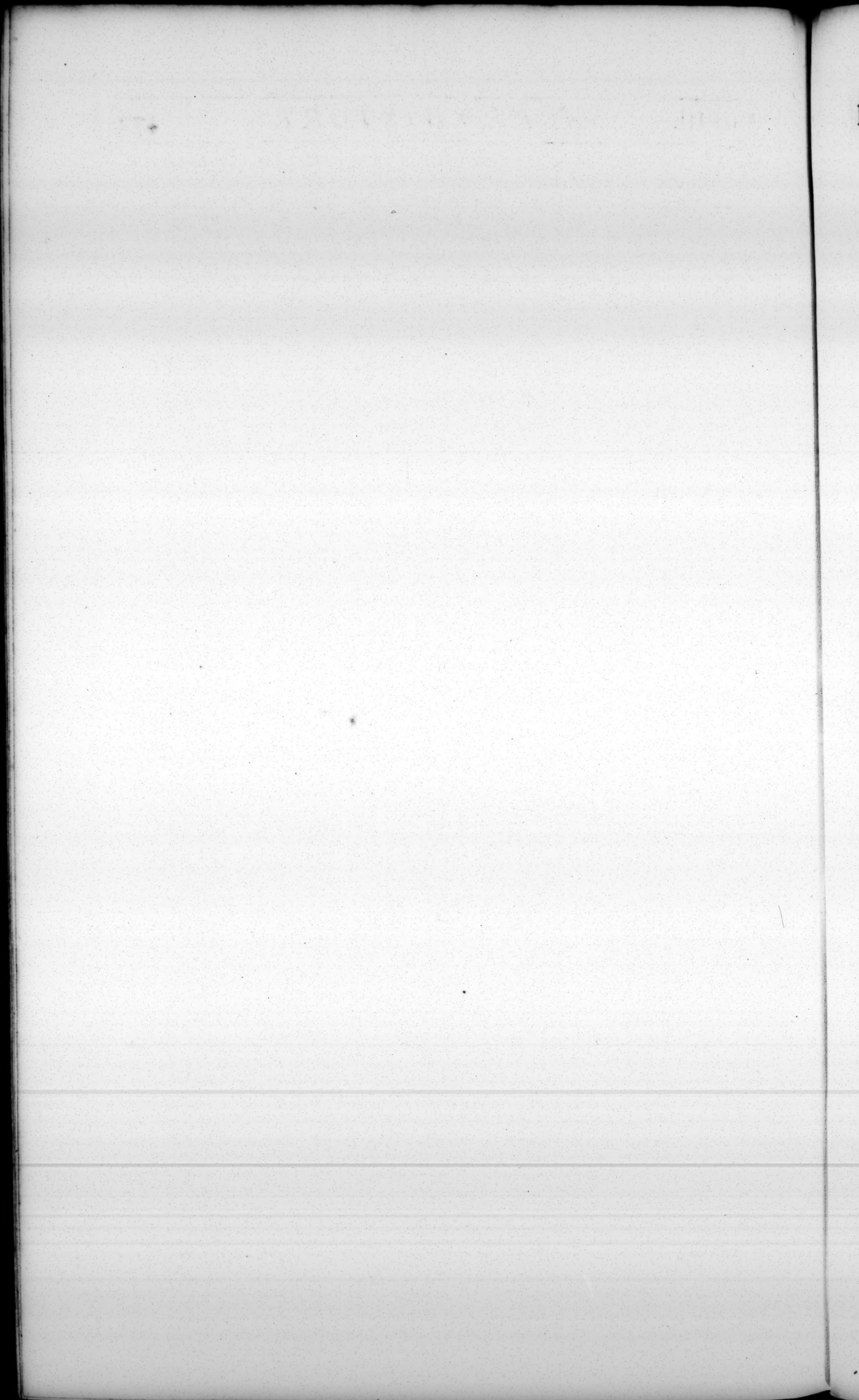
Chap. 10. But *Daniel* flouriſhed, not only through the Reign of this King
Darius; but in the Reign alſo of his Son-in-law *Cyrus*. In whoſe *Third*
Year, he had that extraordinary *Vifion*, relating more eſpecially to
 the latter times of the Jewish State; ſet forth in the 10th, 11th, and
 12th Chapters of his Prophecy. Which is the laſt account the Holy
 Text gives of him. Of his *Death* alſo the Holy Scripture is ſilent.
 But he is ſaid by others, to have died a natural death, in the Land of
 the

the *Chaldeans*, and to be *honourably Buried* there; being laid by himself in the Royal Sepulchre. *Dorothei Synopsis.*

But when, or wheresoever this Holy Prophet died, (for *Dorotheus* is not greatly to be relied on, unless confirmed by better Authority) he had the satisfaction to see, (before his Death) *Liberty given for the Return of his Captive Brethren*, and for the *Rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem*. The Account of which, we must seek from the *Learned Scribe Ezra*.

E e e e e

T H E



T H E
B O O K
O F
E Z R A.

CONTAINING

An History of about Forty Nine Years.

IN the First Year of *Cyrus* King of *Persia*, (that the Word of the Lord by the Mouth of *Jeremiab* the Prophet (*Fer.* 29. 10.) might be fulfilled) the Lord stirred up the Spirit of that King, so that he made *Proclamation* throughout all his Kingdom, and put it also in Writing, after this manner.

Ezra. 1.
A. M.
3479.

‘ Thus saith *Cyrus* King of *Persia*, The Lord God of Heaven hath given me all the Kingdoms of the Earth: And he hath charged me to build him a House at *Jerusalem*, which is in *Judah*. Who is there among you, of all his People, that is willing to go? his God be with him; and let him go up to *Jerusalem*, and build the House of the Lord God of *Israel*; the God who was worshipped in *Jerusalem*; for he is the God. And whosoever remaineth behind his Company (for want of Ability) let the Men of the Place, where he sojourneth, help him, with Silver and with Gold, with Goods and with Beasts; beside the Free-will offering for the House of God.

This was that *Cyrus*, of whom, about Two Hundred Years before he came, the Lord, by his Prophet *Isaiab*, said by Name, *He is my Shepherd*, and shall perform all my Pleasure; even saying to *Jerusalem*, *Thou shalt be built*; and to the Temple, *Thy Foundation shall be laid*, *Isa.* 44. 28.

Upon this *Proclamation*, the chief of the Fathers of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, with the Priests and the Levites, and all others, whose Spirit God had stirred up, to go prepared for their Journey for *Judea*, being in Number about Fifty Thousand Persons in all, of all sorts, under the Conduct of *Zerubbabel* (called also *Zerobabel*, and by the *Persians* named *Sheshbazzar*) whom King *Cyrus* had appointed to be their Governor. Unto whom also he caused to be delivered the Vessels of the House of the Lord, which *Nebuchadnezzar*, when he brought them from *Jerusalem*, had put into the House of his Gods; of which this good Scribe, *Ezra*, gives an *Inventory*, Chap. 1. ver. 9, 10. the Summ total whereof amounteth to Five Thousand and Four Hundred Vessels, ver. 11.

These

Ezra 3. These Captive-Jews being thus returned, and settled by their Governor in their respective Cities; they all gathered together, as one Man, to *Jerusalem*, in the seventh Month following. And altho' they were afraid of the People, (that then Inhabited the Country,) yet they *built the Altar* of the God of *Israel*; and having set it in its place, *offered the daily Burnt-offering* thereon, both Morning and Evening, according as was commanded in the Law of *Moses*; and kept the several *Solemn Feasts*, appointed by God to be held in that Month.

Which done, they began to hire *Workmen*, and provide *Timber*, to be brought by the *Zidonians* from *Lebanon* to *Joppa*; according to the Grant they had of King *Cyrus*, for the building of the House of the Lord.

A. M. 3481. And in the Second Month, of the Second Year, of their Return from the Captivity, *Zerubbabel* the Governour, and *Jeshua* (or *Joshua*), the Chief-Priests, encouraging the rest, and appointing *Surveyors* of the Work, they began to lay the *Foundation* of the House, the *Priests* in their Apparel, with *Trumpets*, and the *Levites*, the Sons of *Asaph*, with *Cymbals*, Singing by turns, and Praising and giving Thanks unto the Lord, in those Words of the Psalmist, *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his Mercy endureth for ever*, Psal. 136. 1, &c. And the People *shouted* with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the *Foundation* of the House was laid.

But many of the *Priests* and *Levites*, and chief of the *Fathers*, who being *antient Men*, had seen the *First House*, *wept with a loud Voice*; when they saw, by the *Foundation* of this, how much short it was like to come of the Former. Thus were the different noises of *Mourning* and *Rejoycing* intermixed, and confounded together; so that the People could not distinguish the *Noise* of the *Shouts* for Joy, from the *Noise* of *Weeping*. But they had other Cause of *Weeping*, beside this.

Ezra 4. For, when their Adversaries (those *Mungrel Samaritans*, who were planted in *Samaria*, and the other Cities of *Israel*, in the room of those *Israelites*, whom *Salmanesser* King of *Assyria* had long before carried away Captive, 2 *Kings* 17.) heard that the Children of the Captivity of *Judah*, had begun to build the Temple unto the Lord God of *Israel*; they came to *Zerubbabel*, and to the chief of the *Fathers*, and said unto them, *Let us build with you; for we seek your God, as well as ye; and we do Sacrifice unto him, ever since the Days of Esar-haddon, King of Assur, who brought us up hither.*

But *Zerubbabel* and *Jeshua*, and the rest of the Chief of the *Fathers* of *Israel*, gave them this short Answer: *We have nothing to do with us, to build an House unto our God; but we our selves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel; as Cyrus the King of Persia hath commanded us.*

This Answer so displeased the People of the Land, that they set themselves thenceforward to discourage the *Jews*, and disturb them in their Building. And finding that did not do, but that the *Jews* went on notwithstanding; they hired *Counsellors* against them, to frustrate their Purpose.

This hiring of *Counsellors*, is supposed to be a *Feeing*, or *Bribing* some of the *prime Ministers* of State in the *Persian Court*; that they by *misrepresenting* the *Jews* and their Undertaking, might alienate the *Mind* of the King from them: As, it seems, they did all the Days of *Cyrus* (who making War in *Scythia*, had left the Government at home to his Son *Cambyses* during his Absence) and until the Reign of *Darius* King of *Persia*.

These

These *Samaritan Adversaries* wrote Letters also against the *Jews*, to several of the Kings of *Persia* successively; as to King *Abasuerus*, in the beginning of his Reign; and to *Artaxerxes* before. The Tenor of ^{*Ezra 4.*} which Letter, directed to *Artaxerxes*, from *Rehum* the Chancellor, and *Shimshai* the Secretary, and the rest of their Companions, in the Name of the Nation of that *mixed* People, whom the great and noble *Afnapper* (or *Efar-baddon*) had brought over and set in the Cities of *Samaria*, with all the rest that were on that side the River, was thus.

‘ Be it known unto the King, that the *Jews* which came up from thee to us, are building *Jerusalem*, that *rebellious and wicked* City; and having laid the Foundations, are setting up the Walls thereof. But if this City be builded, and the Walls set up again; then will they not pay Toll, Tribute and Custom: Whereby the King’s Revenue will be lessened. Now because we have Maintenance from the King’s Palace, we held it not meet for us to see the King’s Dishonour, and conceal it; and therefore have we sent, and certified the King thereof: That Search may be made in the Book of the Records of thy Fathers; so shalt thou find and know, that this hath been a *Rebellious City*, and that they have moved *Sedition* within the same of old time, for which cause it was destroyed. And we further Certifie the King, that if this City be builded again, and the Walls thereof set up, it will be a means that thou shalt have no Portion on this side the River.

To this Letter the King returned Answer, (directed to *Rehum* the Chancellor, and *Shimshai* their Secretary, with their Companions that dwelt in *Samaria*, and unto the rest beyond the River) to this Effect.

‘ The Letter, which ye sent unto us, hath been plainly read before me: And at my Command, Search having been made, it is found, that this City of old time, hath made *Insurrection* against Kings: And that *Rebellion* and *Sedition* hath been made therein. There have been mighty Kings also over *Jerusalem*, which have ruled over all Countries beyond the River: And Toll, Tribute and Custom have been paid to them. Give ye now therefore Commandment, to cause these Men to cease; and that the City be not builded, until further Commandment be given from me. Take heed now, that ye fail not to do this; lest the King be endammaged.

When the Copy of this Letter was read before *Rehum* and *Shimshai*, with their Companions; they went up in haste to *Jerusalem*, unto the *Jews* there: And made them to cease by Force, and Power. Thus was a stop put to the building of the House of God at *Jerusalem*; and the Work ceased, unto the Second Year of the Reign of *Darius* King of *Persia*. Which how long it was, is somewhat uncertain: And that *Uncertainty* arises much from the different Names given by Historians to the same *Persian* Kings.

This *Darius* (in whose Second Year the Work went on again) is generally taken to be the Son of Queen *Esther*; whose Story falling within this Interval, wherein the Building of the Temple was hindered, we are the better at leisure now to enter upon it: And thus it was.



T H E
B O O K
O F
E S T H E R.

A HASUERUS King of *Persia* (mentioned before by *Ezra*, Chap. 4.) and supposed to be the Son of *Darius Hystaspis* (in the Third Year of his Reign, made a Feast unto all his Princes and Servants, the Power of *Persia* and *Media*, the Nobles and Governours of his Provinces; whereof he had an Hundred Twenty and Seven under his Dominion. And to shew his great Riches and Honour, he held this Feast for an Hundred and Four-score Days together, which is much about Half a Year. And when that was ended, he made another Feast, unto all the People, great and small, that were in his Royal City *Shushan*. Which latter Feast he kept for Seven Days, in the Court of the Garden, belonging to his Palace. Where they were entertained under Canopies (or Pavillions) of White, Green and Blue, fastened with Cords of fine Linnen and Purple, to Silver Rings in Pillars of Marble. The Beds (whereon they eat; for in those times Beds were used to eat on, as Tables are now) were of Gold and Silver, upon a Pavement of *Porphyry*, *Alabaster*, and *Marble* of divers Colours.

Esther 1.
A. M.
3491.

Wine they had in abundance, out of the King's Cellars, and that too filled in Vessels of Gold, every one differing from another, to set forth the State and Magnificence of the King. But that which crowned the Feast was, that the Drinking was according to the Law; which provided, that none should be compelled, or pressed to drink: The King having given express Charge to all the Officers of his House, that every Man should be left to his own pleasure for Drinking.

The Queen also, whose Name was *Vashti* (thought by some, but with no great likelihood, to be the Daughter of *Cyrus*, and Sister to *Cambyses*) made a Feast for the Women, as the King had done for the Men, in the Royal House which belonged to the King. And that, perhaps, might be one Reason, why the King kept his Popular Feast abroad, under Pavillions or Canopies, *ver. 6.* So that there was Feasting within Doors, and without.

On the Seventh Day of the King's Feast to the People, when the King's Heart was merry with Wine, he sent his Seven Chamberlains to bring Queen *Vashti* before him, with the Crown Royal; that he might shew the People before they parted, and the Princes, her Beauty: For she was fair to look on.

But

But she (whether not liking to be made so publick a Spectacle) or having in her Feasting tasted too liberally of the Wine; for her Name signifies *Drinking*; *unadvisedly refused* to come at the King's Command: Which so *publick Affront* put the King into so great a Passion, that in the heat of his Anger he consulted his Seven Princes (who, as prime Counsellors, that understood the *Constitution of the Government*, were next unto him, in the Kingdom) what should be done, according to Law, unto the Queen for her *Contempt*, in disobeying the King's Command.

Memucan thereupon, who was one, and the last of these Seven Princes (a married Man, we may suppose) told the King, That *Queen Vashti* had not done wrong to the King only; but to all the Princes also: And indeed to all the People, that were in all the King's Provinces. For, said he, when this Deed of the Queen's shall come abroad; and it shall be known unto all the *Women*, that King *Abasuerus* commanded *Queen Vashti* to be brought in before him, and she refusing, would not come: They will learn, by her Example, to *despise their Husbands*; and the Ladies of *Persia* and *Media*, will urge this as a *Precedent*, unto all the King's Princes: And that will give occasion for *too much Contempt*, on the one Hand; and *Wrath* on the other, to arise between them. If therefore (added he) it please the King, Let there go forth a Royal Commandment from him, and let it be enrolled amongst the Laws of the *Persians* and of the *Medes* (which are unalterable) That *Vashti* come no more before King *Abasuerus*; and let the King give her *Royal Estate* unto another, that is better than she: And when this Decree of the King's shall be published throughout all this great Empire, *all the Wives will give Honour to their Husbands*, both great and small.

Memucan, I observed, was *the last*, in order, of the Seven Princes; yet he spake *first*. Whether from thence was taken the Custom, used among our *English Peers*, that in *Judicial Causes*, the *Youngest* delivers his Judgment first, I know not. But this Counsel of *Memucan*, I find, did so well please the King and his Princes, that they all consenting, it was forthwith put in Execution; and Letters were sent into all the King's Provinces: The Tenor whereof was, That *every Man should bear Rule over his own House*; and that it should be so published in every Province, according to the Language of every People. And thus, for that time, *the Men got the upper Hand again of the Women*.

Ester 2.

But after the King had *slept upon it*, and his Anger was over, he began to remember *Vashti*; both what she had done, and what was decreed against her. Which being observed by his Servants (who might well conclude, that if she should be received into Favour again, she would *meditate Revenge* upon them;) they, to divert the King's Mind from running back to her, and to *keep up their own Interest* with him, *contrived a Project*, that the King should appoint Officers in all the Provinces of his Kingdom, who should take up all the fair young Virgins they could find, and bring them from all Parts, to the King's Palace at *Shushan*: Where being put into the *House for the Women* (under the Care of *Hege*, one of the King's Chamberlain's, and Keeper of the Women) they should be furnished with all things, necessary to their *Purification*, and *Preparation* for the King's Bed. And then, the Maiden which, upon Tryal gave the King most Contentment, should be *Queen*, instead of *Vashti*.

A Proposal so *adapted* to the King's *Lust* could not chuse but find Acceptance with him: And being forthwith put in Execution, brought *many fair Maids to the Court*.

Among

Among those that, on this Occasion, were *press'd into this Service*, the fair *Esther* (who was also called *Hadassah*, and in prophane Authors, *Atossa*) was one. *Esther 2.*

She was the Daughter of one *Abihail*, a Jew, Uncle of *Mordecai* the Jew, who had been carried Captive from *Jerusalem*, by *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*, in the Captivity of *Jeconiah* King of *Judah*: And her Father and Mother both dying, when she was very young, her Cousin *Mordecai*, who lived in *Shushan* (at that time the Royal City of the *Persian Empire*) took her for his own Daughter, and brought her up.

When *Esther* was brought into the *Gynæceum*, or House for Women, and delivered to *Hege* (or *Hegai*) the Chamberlain, she pleased him so well, and obtained so much Kindness from him, that he appointed *Seven Maids* to wait on her: And not only prefer'd her to the best Lodgings in the House, but speedily gave her things for Purification, that she might be ready with the foremost.

For the Order was, that every one of them should be *Twelve Months* in the House of the *Maidens*, to purify and prepare themselves, before they might be brought to the King. Of which time, *Six Months* they spent in purifying with *Oil of Myrrh*: And the other *Six*, with *sweet Odours*. After which, they took their Turns to go in unto the King, and were furnished by the Chamberlain, that had the Care of them, with whatsoever they desired to have, to set themselves off with. But having spent their Night with the King, they returned next Morning to another House of the Women, under the Charge of *Shashtgaz*, another of the King's Chamberlains, who had the Care of the King's Concubines. And none of them, that had once been with the King, came any more to him, unless she pleased him so well that time, that he sent for her again by Name.

Esther had not yet discovered her Kindred, nor what People she was of: For *Mordecai* had charged her, that she should not. But he took care to walk every day before the Court of the Women's House; that he might understand how she did, and what was like to become of her.

It was in the Seventh Year of King *Ahasuerus* his Reign, and in the Tenth Month of that Year, that *Esther's* Turn came to go in unto the King. And whereas the other Virgins tricked up themselves, and set themselves off with the richest and bravest Ornaments, that they might be the more taking and acceptable to the King; every one understanding that a Crown would be the Prize, to her that should gain him to her self: *Esther*, being drawn against her Will, to this, which she knew was a Breach of the Law of God, and a Violation of her Religion, (and therefore only submitted to it, as that which her Captive Condition had subjected her unto) required nothing of the Chamberlain to adorn or set her off, as not desiring to be advanced by such Means.

Yet as her Native Beauty, and courteous Deportment, gained her Favour from all that beheld her: So the King was so taken with her, that he loved her above all the other fine Dames; and she obtained such Grace and Favour in his Sight, that setting the Royal Crown upon her Head, he made her Queen, instead of deposed *Vashti*. And at the Celebration of his Nuptials with her, he made a great Feast unto all his Princes and Servants; which was called *Esther's Feast*: And for her sake, not only gave Gifts, according to the Magnificence of his State; but for that time eased also the Provinces of their Tribute.

Her Guardian Kinsman, *Mordecai*, had yet no higher Preferment, than to sit in the King's Gate; which implies (as some think) he had

an Office at Court, tho' perhaps, it might be but that of *Porter*, or *Usher* of the Hall. For he had charged *Esther*, not to discover her Kindred or People; and she still paying the same *Observance* to his Commands, as she had always done while she lived with him, had kept it secret. Which shews how *little ambitious* he was of Court Preferment.

But now an Occasion happened, which brought *Mordecai*, tho' not suddenly, into greater Note in Court. For while he sat in the King's Gate, he came to understand that *Bigtham* and *Tereſh*, Two of the King's Chamberlains, that kept the Door of the King's Chamber, sought to lay violent Hands upon the King. Of this Plot, *Mordecai* forthwith gave notice to Queen *Esther*; and she acquainted the King therewith in *Mordecai's* Name. Whereupon the Two Chamberlains being seized and convicted, were both hanged for it: And a Record of the whole Process was made, and entred in the *Persian Annals*; but *Mordecai* was not presently taken notice of for it.

Esther 3. For the King's Mind was too much taken up with a New Favourite, whom he advanced on a sudden; and set his Seat above all the Princes that were about him. This was *Haman*, the Son of *Ammedatha* the *Agagite*; whom some suppose to be descended from *Agag*, the King of the *Amalekites*, whom the Prophet *Samuel* slew, 1 Sam. 15. 33. But *Agag* was rather a Title of Royal Office, than Name of a Person, or Family.

Upon this Advancement of *Haman*, all the King's Servants, that were in (or attended at) the King's Gate, bowed to, and revered *Haman*; because the King had given Command they should do so: Only *Mordecai* bowed not to him, nor did him Reverence.

Tremellius and *Junius* give Two Reasons for this. One, because *Haman* was of that Nation (an *Amalekite*) against which God had appointed the Jews to have War for ever, Exod. 17. 14. Deut. 25. 17. The other (which deserves especial Regard) because that Honour was due to God only.

Mordecai, it seems for a while, passed in the Crowd, without being observed by *Haman* himself: But the rest of the King's Servants, who themselves were forward to crouch to the Favourite, began to pick a Quarrel with *Mordecai*, asking him, Why he transgressed the King's Commandment? And when they had thus urged him from day to day, and saw he regarded not what they said; they, willing to try how he would come off, informed *Haman* both of his Behaviour towards him, and also that he was a Jew.

When haughty *Haman* understood that *Mordecai* did not bow nor do him Reverence; he was full of Wrath: And forthwith meditated Revenge. But thinking *Mordecai* too mean a Victim to be Sacrificed single to his Ambition, he scorned to lay Hands on him only; but contrived how he might destroy with him all the Jews, that were throughout the whole Kingdom of *Abasuerus*, for his sake.

And because this was a great Undertaking, *Haman's* Partisans, unto whom he had imparted his Purpose, did cast Pur (that is, the Lot) before *Haman*, from day to day, from the First Month to the Twelfth, that they might know (saith the Marginal Note) what Month and Day should be good to enterprize this Thing, that it might have good Success.

At length having fixed the time, *Haman* addressing himself to the King, thus opened the Matter to him.

'There is (said he) a certain People scattered abroad, and dispersed among the People, in all the Provinces of thy Kingdom; and their Laws are different from all People: Neither keep they the King's Law. Thus

Thus *Haman* from *Mordecai's* not observing that particular Command for *Bowing* to him, *Fallaciously* and *Maliciously* inferred, against all the *Jews*, that they kept not the King's Laws. 'For which Reason (said he) it is not for the King's Profit to suffer them. Therefore (added he) if it please the King, Let a Decree be made, and sent forth in Writing, that they be destroyed. And I will pay Ten Thousand Talents of Silver (a round Sum, amounting to Three Millions, Seven Hundred and Fifty Thousand Pounds of English Money) to the Hands of them that shall have the Charge of the Business, to bring it into the King's Treasures. Upon this, the Marginal Note in the Bible is, *These be the Two Arguments, which commonly the Worldlings and the Wicked use toward Princes against the Godly, that is, The Contempt of their Laws, and diminishing of their Profit, without respect how God is either pleased or displeased.*

The unwary King (too much *Favourite-ridden*, and little thinking that his beloved *Esther* was one of that People, whom his *Minion-Favourite* would have destroyed) took off his Ring, and gave it unto *Haman*, (as *Pharaoh* King of *Egypt*, had done to *Joseph*, Gen. 41. 42.) as a Token that he gave him full Authority, to do what he would in that Matter; telling him withal, that he gave him not only the Ten Thousand Talents of Silver, which he had offered; but the People also, to do with them, as it should seem good unto him.

Haman, having obtained this Grant, was not backward to put it in Execution. But the King's Secretaries were forthwith called for, and Letters were written, by *Haman's* Direction unto the King's Lieutenants, and to the Governors, that were over every Province, and to the Rulers of every People, in their respective Languages; wherein they were charged to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish all *Jews*, both Young and Old, little Children and Women, in one Day. And the Letters bearing Date the Thirteenth Day of the First Month, the Thirteenth Day of the Twelfth Month was the Day appointed for the Massacre. And to animate their Enemies against them, the Spoil of the *Jews* was given them for a Prey.

These Letters, being written in the King's Name, and sealed with the King's Seal, which *Haman* had gotten for that Purpose, were dispatched into all the King's Provinces; and the Posts hastened out by the King's Command. Which done, the King and *Haman* fell to their Cups; but the City *Shushan*, from whence this Decree went forth, was in Perplexity about it.

But none was more sensibly affected, than good *Mordecai*. Who, when he understood what was done, rent his Cloaths, and putting on Sackcloth with Ashes, went out into the midst of the City, and cried with a loud and a bitter Cry. And because none, clothed in Sackcloth, were allowed to enter into the King's Gate; he came and stood before the King's Gate, to shew his Sorrow.

In every Province also, whithersoever this bloody Decree came, there was (as well there might be) great Mourning among the *Jews*, and Fasting, with Weeping and Wailing; and many lay in Sackcloth and Ashes.

Mordecai's walking about in Sackcloth was soon taken notice of, and reported anon to Queen *Esther's* Servants; who quickly acquainted her with it: At the hearing whereof she was exceedingly grieved (tho' she did not yet know the Cause,) and sent him Raiment to cloath himself with, instead of his Sackcloth; but he would not receive it. Whereupon, calling for *Hatach* (one of the King's Chamberlains, whom he had appointed to wait upon her) she commanded him to go to *Mordecai*; and bring her word from him what the matter was, and the Occasion of it.

With

With this Command *Hatach* went forth to *Mordecai*, whom he found in the Street of the City, which was before the King's Gate. And having acquainted him, that he came from the Queen, to know the Cause of his Mourning; *Mordecai* told him of all that had happened: How that *Haman* had promised to pay a great Sum of Money into the King's Exchequer, that he might have Liberty to destroy all the Jews; and that the King had granted it. He gave him also a Copy of the Decree in Writing, that was given at *Shushan* for the destroying of them: Wishing him to shew it unto *Esther*, and declare the whole matter unto her; and withal to charge her (from him) that she should go in unto the King, and make Supplication and Request unto him for her People. For it was high time now, that it should be known what People she was of.

When *Hatach* had reported this to Queen *Esther*, she sent him back to *Mordecai* again, to put him in mind, that it was a certain Rule, which all the King's Servants, and the People of the Provinces, did know; That whosoever, whether Man or Woman, did come unto the King in the inner Court, *uncalled*, was liable by Law to be put to Death; except such to whom, as a particular Favour, the King should hold forth the Golden Scepter: But that, as for her part, she had not been called to come in unto the King, for these Thirty Days last past. So much was the King taken up with his new Favourite.

To this Excuse, *Mordecai* roundly returned her this Answer. *Think not with thy self, that thou shalt escape in the King's House, more than all the Jews, for if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, Enlargement and Deliverance shall arise to the Jews from another Place; but thou, and thy Father's House, shall be destroyed. But consider well what is thy part to do; for who knows, whether thou art come to the Kingdom for such a time as this?*

This smart Message roused the Queen. So that forthwith sending to *Mordecai* again, she wished him to gather together all the Jews that were in *Shushan*, and with them keep a strict Fast for her, without eating or drinking, day or night, for three days together; assuring him, that she, and her Maidens, would fast likewise; and that after that, she would go in unto the King, tho' it was against the Law; and if (added she) *I perish, I perish*.

Accordingly, when this Solemn Fast was over, Queen *Esther*, having put on her Royal Apparel, went and stood in the inner Court of the King's House, over against the Royal Throne, on which the King then sat. And the Lord so disposed the Heart of the King, that when he saw Queen *Esther* standing in the Court, she obtained Favour in his Sight; so that He held forth his Golden Scepter to her. By which, imboldned, she drew near; and having *submissively* touched the top of the Scepter, the King asked her, What she would have, and what was her Request? adding, for her Encouragement, *It shall be given thee, even to the half of the Kingdom*. She then said, If it seem good unto the King, Let the King and *Haman* come this day unto the Banquet, which I have prepared for him.

The King consenting, gave order that *Haman* (who it seems was not then present) should have notice given him to make haste, that he might answer the Queen's Invitation. So the King and *Haman* came to the Banquet that *Esther* had prepared. And at the Banquet of Wine, the King said to her again, *What is thy Petition? it shall be granted thee; and what is thy Request? even to the half of the Kingdom, it shall be performed*.

* *Esther*,

Esther, willing to engage the King to her, as far as she could, before she brake the Business, and for that end desirous to have another Opportunity with him; in humble manner answered, *My Petition and Request is*, if I have now found Favour in the sight of the King, and if it please the King to grant my Petition, and to answer my Request: *Let the King and Haman come to the Banquet, which I shall prepare for them to Morrow*; and then I will make bold to prefer my Petition.

This being agreed to, they parted; and foolish *Haman*, tickled with Joy, went away with a glad Heart: But when, as he went forth, he saw *Mordecai* at the King's Gate, and observed that he stood not up, nor moved for him; his naughty stomach rose, and he was full of Indignation against *Mordecai*. Yet he kept it in as well as he could, until he was come home; and then having gathered his Friends together, with *Zeresh* his Wife; he, to blazon his Happiness, in the first place, set forth the Glory of his Riches, and the multitude of his Children. Then recounting to them all the great things, wherein the King had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the rest of the Princes, and Servants of the King; he told them also, that *Queen Esther* did let no Man come in with the King, unto the Banquet that she had prepared, but himself only: And to morrow, said he, I am invited unto her again with the King. Yet all this (added he) avails me nothing, so long as I see (that unmannerly Clown) *Mordecai the Jew* sit at the King's Gate, and not bow to me.

When *Haman* had done speaking, his Wife and all his Friends, concurring with him in their Resentment of the Affront done him by *Mordecai*, gave him this Advice. Let a Gallows (said they) be made of Fifty Cubits high; and to morrow speak thou unto the King, that *Mordecai* may be hanged thereon; and then go thou in merrily, with the King, unto the Banquet. This Project took so well with *Haman*, that forthwith he caused the Gallows to be made, and set up in readiness.

But God so ordered the matter, that that Night the King could not Sleep. Wherefore to divert him, and spend the time that the Night might not be tedious to him, he called for the Book of the Records of the Chronicles; and that being read before him, it was found therein, that *Mordecai* had discovered the Treason of *Bigthan* and *Tereb*, those two Chamberlains of the King, that guarded his Door, who were hanged for designing to lay hands on the King, Chap. 2. 21, &c.

When the King heard this read, he asked, What Honour and Dignity had been done to *Mordecai* for this? And the King's Servants, who (as Grooms of his Chamber) then waited on him, telling him there had been nothing done for him, the King, that he might give further Order about it, asked, Who is there in the Court?

Just in that Juncture, was *Haman* come into the outward Court of the King's House, betimes in the Morning, to ask leave of the King, that he might hang *Mordecai* on the Gallows, which he had prepared for him: Whom the Servants seeing, they told the King that *Haman* stood in the Court; and the King said, Let him come in.

In came *Haman*, big with Hope, that he should have his will on *Mordecai* that Morning. But before he could introduce his Request, the King prevented him, by asking him a Question; which was, What should be done unto the Man whom the King delighteth to Honour?

Self-conceited *Haman*, concluding in himself, that he was the only Man whom the King could delight to honour, resolved to have it in its utmost Splendor. Wherefore, in answer to the King's Question, he said; For the Man, whom the King delighteth to Honour, let the Royal Apparel be brought, which the King useth to wear, and the Horse
H h h h h h that

‘ that the King rideth upon, and the *Crown-royal* which is set upon his
 ‘ Head ; and let this *Apparel* and *Horse* be delivered to one of the
 ‘ King’s most Noble Princes, that he may therewith array the Man,
 ‘ whom the King delighteth to Honour ; and bring him on *Horse-back*
 ‘ through the Street of the City, and Proclaim before him, *THUS*
 ‘ *SHALL IT BE DONE TO THE MAN WHOM THE*
 ‘ *KING DELIGHTETH TO HONOUR.*

No sooner had *Haman* set the Terms ; but, quite contrary to his Expectation and Hope, the King said to him, *Make haste, take the Apparel and the Horse, and do thou, just so as thou hast said, unto Mordecai the Jew that sitteth at the King’s Gate ; let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken.*

What a Cut was this to proud *Haman* ! Yet Remedy he had none. The King’s Word was a Law, and obey it he must, or fare the worse.

Wherefore taking the *Apparel* and the *Horse*, he went and arrayed *Mordecai* ; and having mounted him on the Royal Steed, brought him on *Horse-back* through the Street of the City, and Proclaimed before him, *Thus shall it be done unto the Man whom the King delighteth to Honour.* Which done, humble *Mordecai* returned again to the King’s Gate ; but *Haman* halted home to his House, Mourning, and (in token thereof) having his Head covered.

Being got home, he related to *Zeresh* his Wife, and the rest of his Friends, the great Disappointments that had befallen him. Which when they had well weighed, they said to him ; *If Mordecai, before whom thou hast begun to fall, be of the Seed of the Jews, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shall surely fall before him.*

More, perhaps, they might have said to him, had they not been interrupted by a Messenger from the King : For while they were yet talking with him, came the King’s Chamberlains to hasten him to the Banquet, which Queen *Esther* had prepared for the King and him ; to which, we may suppose, he went with an heavy Heart, tho’ he put on the best Countenance he could, to hide it.

Esther 7. When they were come to the Banquet of Wine, the King again asked Queen *Esther*, What her Petition and Request was ? assuring her as before, it should be granted, tho’ it were to the one half of his Kingdom.

Esther now thinking it a right time to open her Cause, made Answer ; *If I have found Favour in thy sight, O King, and if it please the King, Let my Life be given me at my Petition, and my People at my Request. For we are Sold, both I, and my People, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish : But if we had been Sold for Bond-men, and Bond-women, I had held my Tongue ; altho’ the Enemy could not countervail the King’s Damage, in the loss of the Tribute we pay.*

The King (having forgot, it seems, or not well considered, what *Haman* had begged, and he had granted) in great displeasure asked, *Who is he ? and where is he, that durst presume in his Heart to do such a thing ?*

The Adversary and Enemy, replied *Esther*, is this wicked *Haman*.

That word put *Haman* into a terrible Fright. Which the King observing, and probably thereupon calling to mind, how *Haman* had surreptitiously gotten the Decree from him, for the destroying of the Jews, he arose from the Banquet of Wine in his wrath, and went into the Palace-Garden.

Haman from thence concluding, that Evil was determined against him by the King, stood up to make Request for his Life to *Esther* the Queen, (the Life of whom, and of all her People, he had so lately Conspired against, and determined to take away :) and falling, as a Suppliant, upon the Bed whereon *Esther* sat, was found in that Posture by the King,

King, when he came in again out of the Garden. Who, *resenting* it as an *Indignity* to himself, that he (a *Subject*, and a *Criminal*) should presume to approach so *indecently* near the Queen; brake forth in this manner, *Will he force the Queen also before me in the House!* Which words were no sooner out of the King's mouth, but the *Officers* that attended, forthwith *covered Haman's Face*: Which to him was a sure *Token of Death*. And *Harbonah*, one of the King's Chamberlains, whose Name signifies *Destruction* (and who had got notice, it seems, of *Haman's Design* against *Mordecai*) acquainting the King, that *Haman had set up a Gallows*, in his own House, Fifty Cubits high, whereon he intended to have hanged *Mordecai*, who had deserved so well of the King; the King bid them hang *Haman* thereon; which without more ado they did.

A. M.
3500.

The King's wrath being now by *Haman's death* appeased, he gave the House of *Haman*, the *Jew's Enemy*, unto Queen *Esther* the *Jew*. And she having now acquainted the King, in what Relation *Mordecai* stood to her, the King sent for *Mordecai* to come before him. And taking off his Ring (as he had done before to *Haman*) he gave it unto *Mordecai*; and *Esther* set *Mordecai* over the House of *Haman*.

Esther 8.

But tho' *Haman* was removed, yet was not *Esther* and the *Jews* free from *Danger*, and from *Fear*. For the Decree against them stood yet in force. *Esther* therefore adventured once more to speak before the King, on that occasion; And falling down at his Feet, besought him, with *Tears*, to put away the *mischief* of *Haman the Agagite*, and the *wicked Device*, which he had devised against the *Jews*.

The King thereupon, *holding forth his Golden Scepter* towards *Esther*, to encourage her to speak her mind, she arose; and standing before the King, said: 'If it please the King, and if I have found Favour in his sight, Let something be written, to *reverse* the Letters devised by *Haman*, to destroy the *Jews*, in all the King's Provinces. For how can I endure to see the Evil which shall otherwise come upon my People? or how shall I bear to see the Destruction of my Kindred?

The King then said to *Esther* and *Mordecai*: Ye see I have already given *Esther* the House of *Haman*, and him they have *Hanged*, because he presumed to lay his hand upon the *Jews*: Write ye now therefore for the *Jews*, as it liketh you, in the King's Name, and Seal it with the King's Seal; for as for the former Writing, which was written in the King's Name, and Sealed with the King's Seal, that is *unalterable*, no Man can *reverse* it.

The King's *Secretaries* being hereupon called, other Letters were written, according as *Mordecai* did dictate; and directed both to the *Jews*, and to the King's Lieutenants, the Deputies and Rulers of the Provinces, from *India*, unto *Ethiopia*, being an Hundred twenty seven Provinces; unto every Province and People after their Language, and to the *Jews* according to their Language. Which Letters contained a *Grant* and *Authority* from the King to the *Jews*; That upon the Thirteenth Day of the Twelfth Month (which was the Day *Haman* had pitched upon for *Massacring the Jews*) they might gather themselves together in every City where they were, to *stand up for their Lives*; and might destroy, slay and cause to perish all the Power of the People and Province that would assault them, both little ones, and Women; and *take the Spoil of them for a Prey*. And as these Letters (bearing date, from the Palace at *Shushan*, on the Three and twentieth of the Third Month) were written in the King's Name, and Sealed with the King's Seal; so they were dispatched to the Provinces by *Swift Posts*, with the greatest *Expedition* that could be, and Copies thereof speedily

Esther 9. speedily published to all the People; that the *Jews* might have timely notice, to be ready against that Day, to *stand upon their Guard*, and avenge themselves on their Enemies.

Then went out *Mordecai* from the Presence of the King, in his *Royal-Robes* of Blue and White, and with a great *Crown of Gold*, and a Garment of fine Linnen and Purple. And not only the City of *Shushan* rejoiced, at this *Turn of the Tide*; but in every Province and City, whithersoever the King's Command and Decree came, the *Jews* had Joy and Gladness; and it was to them a good Day. Nay, *many of the People of the Land turned Jews*; for the fear of the *Jews* fell upon them.

Now when the *Fatal Day* was come, wherein the two *opposite Decrees* were to be put in Execution, which was the Thirteenth Day of the Twelfth Month, the *Jews*, being *timely forewarned*, were *forearmed*; and gathering themselves together in their Cities, throughout all the Provinces of King *Abasuerus*, they *laid so manfully about them*, on those that did assail them, that no Man could withstand them: For the Fear of them fell upon the People. And besides that, all the Rulers of the Provinces, and the King's Lieutenants, with the Deputies and other Officers of the King, helped the *Jews*, because the Fear of *Mordecai* fell upon them also; for *Mordecai* was great in the King's House; and grew Greater and Greater; so that his *Fame* went forth throughout all the Provinces.

Thus encouraged, the *Jews*, *defending themselves*, fell boldly on their Enemies; and made *great Slaughter*, and Destruction of those that hated them; so that in the Royal City *Shushan*, they slew Five Hundred Persons; amongst whom were the *Ten Sons of Haman*. And in other Cities, in the rest of the Provinces, they slew and destroyed of their Foes, to the Number of Seventy and Five Thousand; but *in no Place did they meddle with the Prey*.

An Account of the Number of the Slain in *Shushan*, being brought the same Day to the King, he told Queen *Esther*, that the *Jews* had slain and destroyed Five Hundred Men in *Shushan*, where his Court was kept; by which she might guess what Slaughters they had made in the rest of the Provinces; and then asked her, *What further Request* she had to make? Assuring her, it should be granted.

She, taking Encouragement from that Word, answered, If it please the King, *Let it be granted to the Jews which are in Shushan, to do to Morrow also, as they have done to Day; and let Haman's Ten Sons be hanged on the Gallows*.

It was now with her but *Ask and Have*: For the King Commanded that it should be so done; and a Decree accordingly was given forth at *Shushan* for it. Whereupon *Haman's Ten Sons*, (who were slain the Day before) were Hanged: And the *Jews* at *Shushan* gathering themselves together on the Fourteenth Day of the Twelfth Month, slew Three Hundred Men more there; *but on the Prey they did not lay their Hand*.

For this so great *Deliverance* and *Victory*, the *Jews*, in all parts, testified their *gladness*, by Feasting, and by sending Gifts one to another. But the *Jews* at *Shushan* having *two Days* allowed them to avenge themselves on their Enemies, whereas the rest of the *Jews*, in other Places, had but *one Day* given them: This caused at the first, some Difference in the time of this Feasting: For the *Jews* in all other parts of the Kingdom, having acquitted themselves on the Thirteenth Day, kept their Rejoycing Feast on the Fourteenth. But the *Jews* at *Shushan*, being engaged both the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Days, in defending themselves; kept the Festival for their Deliverance, on the Fifteenth Day.

But

But afterwards, when *Mordecai* had made a *Record* of this great Deliverance, he sent Letters unto all the *Jews*, far and near, throughout all the Provinces of King *Ahasuerus*, to establish it, as a standing Ordinance *Esther 9.* among them, that they should keep both the Fourteenth and the Fifteenth Days of the Month *Adar* (which was the Twelfth Month with them, and takes in part of the Twelfth Month, and part of the First with us) Yearly, as the Days, whereon the *Jews* rested from their Enemies; and the Month that was turned unto them from Sorrow unto Joy, and from Mourning, into a good Day. In Commemoration whereof, they should make those Days, Days of Feasting and Rejoycing, and of sending Portions one to another, and giving Gifts to the Poor.

And because *Haman* (had cast *Pur*, that is, the *Lot*.) in order to know the most successful time, wherein he might consume and destroy the *Jews*; it was agreed and ordained, that these two Days should be called *the Feast of Purim*; and should be Solemnly, Strictly, and Annually kept by all the *Jews* every where. In order whereunto, *Mordecai*, being now advanced to be next in Place and Power unto the King, wrote unto the *Jews* about it; and Queen *Esther* wrote also, with all Authority to confirm his Letters.

The *Jews* thereupon, in all Places, took it, as an Ordinance, upon them, and upon their Seed, and upon all such as should joyn themselves unto them, that they would, without fail, keep those two Days, at the appointed time every Year; in every Family, Province, and City; to be a Memorial of their Deliverance, to them, and to their Seed for ever.

The End of the Book of ESTHER.

I i i i i

Here

Here follows the rest of the

B O O K

O F

E Z R A.

Including the Two P R O P H E T S

HAGGAI and ZECHARIAH.

ALL this while, the Building of the Temple at *Jerusalem*, either went not forward at all, or very slowly. The Work is said to have ceased unto the Second Year of the Reign of *Darius* King of *Persia*, *Ezra* 4. 24. But of the many of that Name, which this was, is not well agreed amongst Writers. The more common Opinion, takes him to be *Darius Artaxerxes*, Sirnamed *Longimanus*, or *Long-hand*; and him to be the Son of *Darius Hystaspis*, or *Abasuerus*, by *Esther*. But it may then occasion some Wonder, that so good a Woman as Queen *Esther*, and so zealous a Jew as *Mordecai*, having such Power as they had with King *Abasuerus*, should not have set the Wheel of that work a going in their time.

Ezra 5.
A. M.
3508.

It was by the Incouragement which two of the Lord's Prophets gave, that *Zerubbabel* and the rest, applied themselves again to the work, as *Ezra* informs us, *Chap.* 5. 1.

For all the Prophets formerly named, being by this time gone to rest; the Prophets *Haggai*, and *Zechariah* were raised up by the Lord, in the Second Year of this King *Darius*, and sent to Prophecy unto the Jews, that were in *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, to stir them up to greater zeal, and diligence in the Work of the Lord. For they, being disheartned, by the Opposition they had met with from their ill Neighbours on the one hand, and the Prohibition from the Court on the other; had let up a wrong Conceit in their Minds, that *the time was not yet come*, wherein the House of the Lord should be built. Wherefore neglecting that, they spent their time, in building Houses for themselves.

This the Prophet *Haggai* (unto whom the word of the Lord came, on the First Day of the Sixth Month, in the Second Year of King *Darius*) reprov'd them for; directing his Message to *Zerubbabel* the Governor, and *Joshua* the High-Priest, as the two Chiefs, or Representatives, one of the People, the other of the Priests.

Then

Haggai 1. Then calling them to consider the many and great Disappointments they had met with, and the unsuccessfulness of their Undertakings, since they had neglected the Lord's Work; he tells them, That all this had happened unto them by God's appointment; who had restrained the *fruitful Influences* of Heaven, and thereby rendered the Earth *unfruitful* to them; whereby they had been afflicted, with *Scarcity, Want, and Famine*; because they, now that the Lord had *turned their Captivity*, and brought them back into their own Land, had, *for Fear of Man*, suffered his House to lie waste, and had imployed themselves in Building, and Beautifying their own Houses. Wherefore he bid them (loyter no longer, but) *go up to the Mountain, and bring Timber, and build the House*; assuring them from the Lord, that if they did so, he would take Pleasure in it, and be glorified therein.

This *roused up* both the Governour, and the People; who being in fear before the Lord, from the sense of their great Neglect, resolved now to obey the Voice of the Lord their God, by his Prophet *Haggai*. And he, to encourage this good Resolution, and hearten them on in it, came to them again, with this *short, but comforting* Message, *I am with you*, saith the Lord. And the Lord at the same time, *stirring up the Spirit of Zerubbabel* the Governour, and the Spirit of *Joshua* the High-Priest, and the Spirits of all the Remnant of the People, they came and resumed their Work in the House of the Lord, on the Four and twentieth Day of that Sixth Month, in the Second Year of King *Darius*, after a *Cessation* (as some compute) of about *Thirty Years*.

Haggai 2. And because the *old Men*, who had seen the former Temple in its Beauty, wept at the laying the Foundations of this, when they saw how much short it was likely to be of the Former; the Prophet *Haggai* was sent to them again, in the Seventh Month following, to encourage them to go on cheerfully; assuring them afresh, that the Lord was with them in this their Undertaking, and predicting that *the Lord would fill this House with Glory*; so that (how much soever it might come short of the Former in *Bulk, and Stateliness of Structure*) *the Glory of this latter House should be greater, than that of the former*. Which *Expositors* not finding in Story made good *literally*; have *Figuratively* applied to the Gospel Church: *Where I wish all may see it*.

While thus the Prophet *Haggai* was earnestly concerned, to hearten on the *Jews* in the Work of *Rebuilding the Temple*; the Lord raised up another Prophet, to confirm and strengthen them in their Undertaking.

Zeck. 1. This was *Zechariah*, the Son of *Barachiah*, of the Family of *Iddo*. Who beginning to Prophecy in the Eighth Month, of the Second Year of King *Darius*; first puts them in mind of their Father's *Disobedience*; who, by refusing to hearken unto the Lord by his Prophets, had highly provoked him to Displeasure. Then warning them not to be like their Fathers therein; he exhorted them to turn unto the Lord; assuring them that if they did so, the Lord would turn unto them.

By these two Prophets thus encouraged, *Zerubbabel* and *Joshua* went on with the Building; and the Workmen plied it diligently. But before they could finish it, *Tatnai* (the Governour on that side the River,) and *Shethar-Boznai*, with their Companions, (Enemies also to the *Jews*, but not so bitter and *implacable* as the rest) having gotten notice of their Work, came upon them, and examined them, Who had commanded them to build that House, and to make up that Wall? Demanding also the *Names* of the Men, that undertook that Building.

By this *strict Inquiry* they thought, it seems, to have *scared the Jews*, and made them give over their Work, as they had done formerly. But the *Eye of their God* was upon the Elders of the *Jews*, and the *Prophets*,

phets of God helped them: So that these Enemies of theirs could not now cause them to cease; whereupon the Matter was brought before King *Darius*.

For when *Tatnai*, the Governour on that side the River, with *Shethar-Boznai*, and his Companions the *Apharsachites*, saw that the *Jews* would not be frighted from their Work, they wrote a Letter to King *Darius*, to give him an Account of the Matter: Whereof this is the Copy.

Unto Darius the King, all Peace.

‘ Be it known unto the King, that we went into the Province of
 ‘ *Judea*, to the House of the great God, which is builded with great
 ‘ Stone, and Timber is laid in the Walls: And this Work goeth on fast,
 ‘ and prospereth in their Hands. Then asked we the Elders of the
 ‘ People, *Who commanded you to build this House, and to make up these*
 ‘ *Walls?* We asked their Names also; to the intent that we might not
 ‘ only certify thee of the Building: But might give thee the Names of
 ‘ those among them, that were the Chief in the Work. And thus
 ‘ they returned us Answer. *We are (said they) the Servants of the*
 ‘ *God of Heaven and Earth; and build the House that was builded*
 ‘ *these many Years ago: Which a great King of Israel did build and set*
 ‘ *up.* But after that our Fathers had provoked the Lord God of *Isra-*
 ‘ *el*, to wrath, he gave them into the Hand of *Nebuchadnezzar* King
 ‘ of *Babylon*, the *Chaldean*; who destroyed this House, and carried away
 ‘ the People unto *Babylon*. But in the First Year of *Cyrus* the King of
 ‘ *Babylon*, he made a Decree to build this House of God. And the
 ‘ Vessels of Gold and Silver of the House of God, which *Nebuchadnezzar*
 ‘ took out of the Temple that was at *Jerusalem*, and brought into
 ‘ the Temple at *Babylon*; those did King *Cyrus* take out of the Temple
 ‘ of *Babylon*, and delivered them unto one whose Name was *Sheshbazzar*,
 ‘ whom he had made Governour; saying, *Take these Vessels, Go,*
 ‘ *carry them into the Temple at Jerusalem, and let the House of God be*
 ‘ *builded in its Place.* Whereupon the same *Sheshbazzar* came, and laid
 ‘ the Foundation of the House of God, which is in *Jerusalem*; and
 ‘ since that time, even until now, hath it been in building: And yet it
 ‘ is not finished. Now therefore, if it seem good to the King, let search
 ‘ be made in the King’s Treasure-House, at *Babylon*, whether it be so,
 ‘ that a Decree was made by *Cyrus* the King, that this House of God
 ‘ at *Jerusalem* should be builded: And let the King send his Pleasure to
 ‘ us, concerning this Matter.

When this Letter came to the King, Search was thereupon made in the *Archieves* (or House of the Rolls) where the Records were laid up in *Babylon*; and there was found in *Achmetha* (or *Echbatana*) in the Palace that was in the Province of the *Medes*, a Roll; wherein was a Record in these Terms.

In the First Year of *Cyrus* the King, the same King *Cyrus* made a Decree, concerning the House of God in *Jerusalem*; of which this was the Tenor.

‘ Let the House be builded, the Place where they offered Sacrifices; and let the Foundations be strongly laid: The Height thereof Threescore Cubits, and the Breadth thereof Threescore Cubits, with Three Rows of great Stones, and a Row of Timber; and let the Expences be given out of the King’s House. And also let the Golden and Silver Vessels of the House of God, which *Nebuchadnezzar* took forth out of the Temple which was at *Jerusalem*, and brought

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‘ unto

Ezra 6. ' unto *Babylon*, be *restored*, and brought back again unto the Temple
' which is to be built at *Jerusalem*; and let them be placed in their
' own Places in the House of God.

When King *Darius* had read this *Decree* of *Cyrus*, he signified the Contents thereof to *Tatnai*, *Shethar-boznai*, and their Companions, the *Apharsachites*; and withal gave them a *strict Charge*, that they should be *far from molesting*, or hindring the *Jews* in their Building: But that they should let the Work of the House of God alone; and let the Governours and Elders of the *Jews* build the House of God in its Place.

' Moreover, (said he, in his Letter, in answer to theirs) I make a *Decree*, what ye shall do to the Elders of these *Jews*; for the building
' of this House of God; viz. That out of the King's *Tribute* beyond
' the River, *Expences* be forthwith given to these Men, that they be
' not hindered. And what they have need of, for the Burnt-offering of
' the God of Heaven, both of young *Bullocks*, *Rams* and *Lambs*, with
' *Wheat*, *Salt*, *Wine* and *Oil*; let it be given them Day by Day without fail, according to the Direction of the *Priests* which are at *Jerusalem*: That they may offer *Sacrifices* of sweet Savours unto the
' God of Heaven, and pray for the Life of the King, and of his Sons.
' And further (added he) I have made a *Decree*, that whosoever shall
' alter this Word, Let *Timber* be pulled down from his House, and
' let him be hanged thereon; and let his House be made a *Dunghil* for
' this. And the God that hath caused his Name to dwell there, destroy
' all Kings and People, that shall set their Hand to alter this Word, and
' to destroy this House of God, that is at *Jerusalem*. I *Darius* have
' made a *Decree*: Let it be done with Speed.

Governour *Tatnai*, with *Shethar-Boznai*, and their Companions, having received these Letters from the King, in compliance therewith, speedily furnished the *Jews* with all *Necessaries* for their Building. And the Work going on prosperously, through the *Encouragement* which the Elders of the *Jews* received from the Prophets, *Haggai* and *Zechariah*; the House was finished on the Third Day of the Month *Adar* (which is the Twelfth Month) in the Sixth Year of the Reign of this King *Darius*.

Zeck. 7. The Building thus finished, the Children of *Israel*, both *Priests*, *Levites* and People, (called by a general Name, the *Children of the Captivity*, that is, all such of them as were returned from the Captivity,) together with all those *Profelytes*, that had separated themselves unto them, from the *Filthiness* of the Heathen of the Land, to seek the Lord God of *Israel*; kept the *Feast* of the *Dedication* of the House of God with Joy, and with great Offerings. And having set the *Priests* in their *Divisions*, and the *Levites* in their *Courses*, for the Service of God, according to the Prescript of *Moses*, they kept the *Passover* on the Fourteenth Day of the First Month; and the *Feast* of *Unleavened Bread* Seven Days with Joy: For the Lord made them joyful, by turning the Heart of the King unto them, to strengthen their Hands in the Work of the House of God, the God of *Israel*.

The *Jews*, it seems, in the Captivity, had agreed among themselves to observe several *Fasts*, on certain mournful Occasions; as one in the Tenth Month, on the Day that *Jerusalem* was besieged (2 Kings 25. 1.) Another in the Fourth Month, when the City was taken, Jer. 52. 6, 7. Another in the Fifth Month when the Temple was destroyed by Fire (Jer. 52. 12.) And another in the Seventh Month, when their Governour *Gedaliah* was slain (Jer. 41. 1, 2.)

These Days they had kept with *Fasting* and *Weeping*, and abstaining from Company and Business. But now a Doubt arose among them, concerning the *Fast* in the Fifth Month (which was for the Destruction of
the

the Temple) whether they should keep that Fast still, now that *the Temple was Rebuilt*. And upon this Occasion the *Jews* (whether they ^{Zech. 7.} that were returned, or they that were not yet returned, from *Babylon*, is not agreed among Interpreters, but divers go divers ways) sent their *Ambassadors*, or *Deputies* (*Sherazer* and *Regem-melech*, with their Men) to enquire of the Lord, by the Priests, which were in the House of the Lord of Hosts, and by the Prophets, whether they should weep in the Fifth Month, and separate themselves, as they had done these many Years?

The Lord thereupon, by his Prophet *Zechariah*, took occasion to let them know, that in *Fasts* of their own appointing, he was not concerned (whereby is plainly intimated, that *nothing in Religion, of Man's Institution, is accepted by the Lord*;) And that it would please him better, to see them execute true Judgment, and shew Mercy and Compassion every one to his Brother; and abstain from oppressing the Widow, the Fatherless, the Stranger, and the Poor, and from imagining Evil one against another in their Hearts: Than to be ever so observant of outward Performances.

Hitherto the work of Rebuilding the Temple had been carried on, by the Direction and Conduct of *Zerubbabel* the Governour, and *Joshua* the High-Priest: Both whom the Prophet *Zachary* speaks Honourably of; the one in the Third, and the other in the Fourth Chapter of his Prophecy. But now that the Temple was finished, *Ezra* set forward to go up to *Jerusalem*, in the Seventh Year of *Artaxerxes*, by some Historians called, for Distinction sake, *the Second*.

This *Ezra* was a Priest, (whose Genealogy, in Chap. 7. is deduced from *Aaron*) and a learned Scribe in the Law of God, who had hitherto staid at *Babylon*, with those of the Captivity which had not yet returned. But now, there being great want of such a Man at *Jerusalem*, to instruct the People in the too long neglected Law of God; and reform the Manners of both Priests and People: The Lord both kindled a Zeal in *Ezra*, to under take that Work; and gave him Favour with the King, to furnish him for the Journey.

A. M.
3513.

For when *Ezra* had acquainted the King with his Purpose, and requested leave of him that he might go; the King gave him not only License to go, but an ample Commission to take with him whomsoever he would, and what also he should judge needful, both for his Journey thither, and Service there. Of which Commission, this was the Tenor.

ARTAXERXES, King of Kings, Unto EZRA the Priest a perfect Scribe of the Law of the God of Heaven, Greeting.

‘ I make a Decree, That all they of the People of *Israel*, and of his
 ‘ Priests and *Levites* in my Realm, which of their own Free-will are
 ‘ minded to go up to *Jerusalem*, may go with thee; Forasmuch as
 ‘ thou art sent of the King, and of his Seven Counsellors, to enquire
 ‘ concerning *Judah* and *Jerusalem*; according to the Law of thy God,
 ‘ which is in thine Hand; and carry the Silver and Gold, which the
 ‘ King and his Counsel lers, have freely offered unto the God of *Israel*,
 ‘ whose Habitation is in *Jerusalem*; and all the Silver and Gold that
 ‘ thou canst find in all the Provinces of *Babylon*, with the Free-will-Offer-
 ‘ ings of the People, and of the Priests, offering willingly for the
 ‘ House of their God, which is at *Jerusalem*: That thou mayest spee-
 ‘ dily buy with this Money Bullocks, Lambs and Rams, with their
 ‘ Meat-offerings and Drink-offerings, and offer upon the Altar of the
 ‘ House of your God, which is at *Jerusalem*. And whatsoever shall seem
 ‘ good

‘ good to thee, and to thy Brethren, to do with the rest of the Silver
 ‘ and Gold, that do, *after the Will of your God*. The Vessels also that
 ‘ are given thee, for the Service of the House of thy God, which thou
 ‘ shalt have occasion to bestow, *bestow it out of the King’s Treasure-*
 ‘ *house*. And I, even I *Artaxerxes* the King, do make a *Decree* to all the
 ‘ *Treasurers* which are beyond the River, that whatsoever *Ezra* the
 ‘ Priest, the Scribe of the Law of the God of Heaven, shall require
 ‘ of you, it be done unto an *Hundred Talents* of Silver (Thirty Seven
 ‘ Thousand and Five Hundred Pounds) and to an Hundred Measures
 ‘ (*Cors*) of *Wheat* (a *Cor* containing Five Bushels and Five Gallons, makes
 ‘ Five Hundred Sixty Two Bushels and a half) and to an Hundred
 ‘ *Baths* of *Wine*, (a *Bath* being the Tenth part of an Omer, and con-
 ‘ taining Four Gallons and an half, makes Four Hundred and Fifty Gal-
 ‘ lons) and to an Hundred *Baths* of *Oil*, and *Salt* without Measure.
 ‘ Whatsoever is commanded by the God of Heaven, let it be diligently
 ‘ done for his House: For *why should there be Wrath against the King and*
 ‘ *his Sons*? Also we certify you, that touching any of the Priests and
 ‘ *Levites*, Singers, Porters and *Nethinims*, or Ministers of this House
 ‘ of God, it shall not be lawful to impose Toll, Tribute or Custom
 ‘ upon them. And thou *Ezra*, after the Wisdom of thy God, that is
 ‘ in thine Heart, set *Magistrates* and *Judges*, which may judge all the
 ‘ People that are beyond the River (that is) all *such as know the*
 ‘ *Laws* of thy God, and *teach them that know them not*. And whoso-
 ‘ ver will not do the Law of thy God, and the Law of the King, let
 ‘ Judgment be speedily executed upon him; whether it be unto Death,
 ‘ or to Banishment, or to Confiscation of Goods, or to Imprisonment.

Ezra having received these Letters from the King, blessed the Lord, in a thankful Acknowledgment of his Mercy, in having put it into the King’s Heart, to *beautify* the House of the Lord in *Jerusalem*; and in giving him *Favour* with the King, and with his Counsellors and mighty Princes. And being strengthened by the good Hand of the Lord his God, that was upon him for his Encouragement, he gathered together out of *Israel* chief Men to go up with him.

Ezra 8.

These, with the Males of their several Families, being in Number One Thousand Four Hundred Ninety and Six (of whom there is a *Mustler-Roll* in *Chap. 8.* from *Ver. 2.* to 15.) *Ezra* drew down to the River that runneth to *Abava*: Where *encamping* for Three Days, he took an Account of the People and the Priests; but found no *Levites*, nor *Nethinims* among them. Wherefore he sent back *Eliezer*, and some half a Score more of the Chief Men for Understanding, with a Message to *Iddo* (who was the Chief of the *Nethinims* at *Casiphia*.) Requiring him to send with them some *Ministers*, fit for the Service of the House of the Lord. And (the Lord so disposing it) they brought him a *Man of Understanding*, and some Seven or Eight and Thirty more, that were *Levites*, with Two Hundred and Twenty *Nethinims*; who were under Officers, for the more *Servile Work* of the Temple, such as the *Fraudulent Gibeonites* were at first appointed to.

When these were come to the Camp, and had joyned the rest of the Company, they made a *Body* of about One Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty. Yet *Ezra* considering how great a *Charge* they had with them, in both *Money* and *Plate*; and apprehensive of the Dangers that might attend them in their March, from the *Free-booters* of the Countries through which they were to pass: Proclaimed a *Fast* at the River, that they might *humble themselves* before their God, and implore his Guidance, Direction and Care for them, their Little Ones, and all their Substance. For tho’ he might, for asking, have had a *Convoy*,
 from

from the King, for their Defence; he was ashamed to ask it: Having before told the King, that the *Hand of their God would be, for good, upon all them that fought him*; and his *vindictive Power and Wrath* against all those that forsook him.

Having thus Fasted, and besought their God on this Occasion, and received from him some Token of *Acceptance*, they committed themselves to his *Protection*, and set forward again. And *Ezra* having drawn forth Twelve of the Chief of the Priests, delivered to them by Weight the Silver and the Gold, and the Vessels, which the King, with his Counsellors and his Lords, and all *Israel* that were present, had offered as an Offering for the House of the Lord; and gave them their Charge in these Words.

Ye are Holy (that is, *Consecrated* unto the Lord,) and these *Vessels* are *Holy* (that is, *dedicated* unto his use;) and the Silver and the Gold are a *Free-will-offering* unto the Lord God of your Fathers. Watch ye therefore *carefully*, and keep them *safe*, until ye can come to weigh them unto the chief of the Priests and *Levites*, and the Fathers of *Israel* at *Jerusalem*, in the Chambers of the House of the Lord.

This Treasure was of a very considerable Value. For there were Six Hundred and Fifty Talents of Silver; which at Three Hundred Seventy Five Pounds to the Talent, make Two Hundred Forty Three Thousand, Seven Hundred and Fifty Pounds. The Silver Vessels weighed an Hundred Talents, which came to Thirty Seven Thousand and Five Hundred Pounds. The Gold in Coin was an Hundred Talents, which at Four Thousand Five Hundred Pounds each Talent, brings forth Four Hundred and Fifty Thousand Pounds. Which Three Sums together, raise Seven Hundred Thirty One Thousand, Two Hundred and Fifty Pounds. Besides all which, there were Twenty Basons of Gold, of a Thousand Drams, and Two Vessels of Fine Copper, as precious as Gold. All which the Priests and *Levites* took the Charge of, to bring to the House of their God in *Jerusalem*.

It was on the *First* Day of the *First* Month, that *Ezra* set forth with his *Troops*, from *Babylon*; and on the *Twelfth* Day of the same Month, having disposed all things in order, they left the River of *Abava*, where they had made an *Halt*, and pursued their Journey to *Jerusalem*: Where they arrived on the *First* Day of the *Fifth* Month, *Chap. 7. 9. and 8. 32.* So that they spent Four Months compleat in the Journey. Nor was their *Fear* of *Robbers* altogether groundless. For they were *waylaid*, it seems: But the Lord was with them, and delivered them from the Hand of their Enemies, and of such as *lay in wait* by the way.

After they were come to *Jerusalem*, they lay still Three Days, to rest and refresh themselves; and on the Fourth Day they discharged themselves of the Treasure they had brought: Delivering it by Weight, in the House of the Lord, to those Priests that were appointed to receive, and take the charge of it; and an *Inventory* was made of both the Number and Weight.

Then were Burnt-offerings offered unto the God of *Israel*, by the Children of those that had been carried away; and which were now come out of the Captivity. After which, *Ezra* delivering the King's Commissions unto the King's Lieutenants and Governors on that side the River; they, in obedience thereunto, furnished the People, with all things necessary to the Service of the House of God.

But now came *Ezra's Exercise* on. For some of the Princes, or Chief of the *Israelites* came to him, and told him, that the People of *Israel*, and the Priests and the *Levites*, had not separated themselves from the People of the Land, namely, the *Canaanites*, *Hittites*, *Perizzites*, *Jebusites*, Ezra 9.

sites, Ammonites, Moabites Egyptians, and Amorites ; but did according to their Abominations. For they had taken of their Daughters for Wives, both to themselves, and to their Sons, tho' expressly forbidden, Deut. 7. 3. By which means the Holy Seed, had mingled themselves with the People of those Lands; and (which made it the worse, and the harder to be reformed) the Princes and Rulers had been Chief in this Trespass.

Ezra 9.

When Ezra heard this, he rent his Garments, and for meer Grief, plucking off the Hair of his Head and Beard, he sat down astonished, until the Evening-Sacrifice. During which time, such of the People, as trembled at the Words of the God of Israel, because of the Transgression of those others of the Captivity, that had been drawn into this Evil, gathered themselves about him.

But when the time of the Evening-Sacrifice was come (which was the Twelfth Hour with them, who began the Day at Six in the Morning, and answers the Sixth Hour in the Afternoon with us) Ezra, falling on his Knees, and spreading out his Hands unto the Lord his God, thus poured forth the Grief of his Soul before him.

' O my God (said he) I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my Face unto thee, my God: For our Iniquities are increased over our Heads, and our Trespass is grown up unto the Heavens. Since the Days of our Fathers, have we been in a great Trespass unto this Day. And for our Iniquities have we, our Kings, and our Priests, been delivered into the Hands of the Kings of the Nations, to the Sword, to Captivity, and to be made a Spoil; and to Confusion of Face, as at this Day. And now, for a little space, Grace (or Favour) hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a Remnant to escape, and to give us a Nail (meaning a Settlement) in his holy Place; that our God may lighten our Eyes, and give us a little Reviving in our Bondage. For we were Bondmen: Yet our God hath not forsaken us in our Bondage. But hath extended Mercy unto us, in the Sight of the Kings of Persia; to give us a Reviving; that we might set up the House of our God, and repair the Desolations thereof, and to give us a Wall (a Defence) in Judah and Jerusalem. And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken thy Commandments, which thou hast commanded by thy Servants the Prophets, saying, *The Land, unto which ye go to possess it, is unclean with the Filthiness of the People thereof, by reason of their Abominations; which have filled it, from one end to the other, with their Uncleaness. Give not therefore your Daughters unto their Sons, neither take their Daughters unto your Sons; nor seek their Peace, or their Wealth (that is, their Welfare) for ever: That ye may be strong, and may eat the good of the Land; and leave it for an Inheritance to your Children for ever.* And now after all that hath come upon us, for our Evil Deeds, and for our great Trespases; seeing thou, our God, hast punished us, less than our Iniquities deserve, and hast given us such Deliverance as this: Should we again break thy Commandments, and joyn in Affinity with the People of these Abominations? Wouldst not thou be angry with us, till thou hast consumed us, so that there should be no Remnant, nor Escaping? O Lord God of Israel, thou art Righteous: For we remain yet escaped, as it appeareth this Day. Behold, we are before thee in our Trespases: But we cannot stand before thee, because of this.

Ezra 10. When Ezra had ended his Confession and Prayer, weeping, and casting himself down before the House of God; the Lord wrought so upon the Hearts of the People, that there assembled unto him out of Israel, a very great Congregation of Men, Women and Children: And the People

People *wept very sore*. Which when *Shechaniah* (a Man of a Considerable Family in *Israel*) observed, he, for himself and the rest of the *Ezra 10.* People, thus spake unto *Ezra*.

‘ We have indeed trespassed against our God, in having *taken strange Wives* of the People of the Land: Yet from this Appearance of Repentance, and Disposition to Reformation, there is ground of hope in *Israel* concerning this thing. Let us now therefore *make a Covenant* with our God, *to put away all the strange Wives*, and such as are born of them, according to the Counsel of my Lord, and of those that *tremble* at the Commandment of our God (whom the Fear of God hath preserved out of this Transgression:) And let it be done according to the Law. And in order thereunto, *Arise, thou, Ezra*, for this matter belongeth *principally* unto thee (to whom God hath given both *Learning to perswade*, and *Authority to require* it of the People:) yet we also will be with thee; therefore *be of good Courage*, and do it.

Then *Ezra*, rising up from before the House of God (where, it seems, he had all this while lain *prostrate* before the Lord) made the chief Priests, with the *Levites*, and all *Israel*, to swear, that they would do according to this Word. After which, having *retired* himself into the Chamber of *Johanan*, that he might there *Fast* and *Mourn*, he caused *Proclamation* to be made, unto all the Children of the Captivity, throughout *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, that they should gather themselves together unto *Jerusalem*, within Three Days: Upon *Penalty*, that whosoever should neglect to come within that time, should *forfeit all his Substance*, and be himself *separated from the Congregation of Israel*.

Upon this *Summons*, all the Men of *Judah* and *Benjamin* flocked in unto *Jerusalem*, within the Three Days. But it being the *Ninth Month*, the Season proved very wet; so that the People sitting in the Street, before the House of God, *trembled*: Partly because of the *Guilt* they were under, and partly for the great Rain, which perhaps they might take to be a *Judgment* upon them for their Offence.

Being thus gathered together, *Ezra* the Priest, standing up, did thus open the Business unto them.

‘ Ye have transgressed, in that ye have *taken strange Wives*, to *encrease the Trespass of Israel*. Now therefore make Confession unto the Lord God of your Fathers, and do his Will; in *separating yourselves from the People of the Land*, and from the *strange Wives*.

To this all the Congregation answering with a loud Voice, said; ‘ As thou hast said, so must we do. But the People are many, and it is a time of *much Rain*, so that we are not able to stand abroad: Neither is this a Work of one Day or Two; for we are many, that have transgressed in this thing. Now therefore, let our Rulers throughout all the Congregation, stand for us. And let all them, who have *taken strange Wives* in our several Cities, come at appointed times; and with them the Elders and Judges of every City (to testify, that these are all that are guilty in that Place:) And so proceed from time to time; until the *fierce Wrath* of our God, for *this matter*, be turned from us.

This Proposition being approved, and agreed to, *Ezra* the Priest, and certain Chief of the Fathers, according to their Families (having some few others added to them, as *Assistants*) were by Name deputed to that Service: Who on the First of the *Tenth Month* sat down to examine that matter; and did not make an end, with all the Men that had taken strange Wives, until the First Day of the *First Month* following.

But when they had gone through the work, and had taken a *List* of all the Names of all the Men, both *Priests* and People, that had taken
strange

Ezra 10. *strange Wives* (of whom, some had Children by them : They made them give the hand (which was a certain Ceremony of giving Security, used to confirm a Covenant, as in *Ezek.* 17. 18.) that they would put them away. Which done, they offered their *Trespass-offering*, according to the Law : And so the matter ended.

But altho' some Disorders were now reformed : Yet many Enormities remained yet to be reformed ; both in the People, and more especially in the Priests. And altho' the Temple was now Rebuilt : Yet the City lay in a manner Waste, without Gates or Wall ; which gave Advantage to the Enemies of the Jews, to insult them. For Zerubbabel, it is probable, was by this time dead. And tho' Ezra was a Learned Scribe, and a Zealous Priest ; and had prepared his Heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel Statutes and Judgments, *Ez.* 7. 10. Yet he seems not to have been so qualified for the Exercise of Civil Authority, as the Condition of the People, and State of the Place, required.

Wherefore it pleased the Lord to send another of his Servants thither, to carry on that Work, and finish what of it yet remained. This was Nehemiah, one of the Captive Jews ; who was Cup-bearer to King Artaxerxes, and in especial Favour with him.

T H E

T H E
B O O K
O F
N E H E M I A H:

Including the Prophet MALACHI:

*And containing an History (as some compute) of
about Seventy Years.*

NEHEMIAH being at *Shushan* the King's Palace, (where his Office required his Attendance) and meeting one Day with certain of his Brethren; Men of *Judah*, who had been at *Jerusalem*, and were come back again to *Chaldea*: He enquired of them concerning the *Jews*, that were returned from the Captivity; and concerning the State of *Jerusalem*. They told him that the Remnant which were left of the Captivity there, in the Province of *Judea*, were in great Affliction, and under foul Reproach from their Enemies. That the Wall of *Jerusalem* remained broken down, and the Gates thereof burnt with Fire, as the *Babylonians* had left it, when *Nebuchadnezzar* sacked the City, 2 Chron. 36. 19. and Jer. 52. 13, 14.

This so affected good *Nehemiah*, that (tho' he himself, for himself, wanted nothing, living in the Favour of his Prince, and Affluence of all things necessary;) he sat down and wept: And having Mourned and Fasted several Days, he at length poured forth his Supplication to the Lord, in this manner.

' I beseech thee, O Lord God of Heaven, the great and terrible God,
' that keepeth Covenant and Mercy for them that love him, and ob-
' serve his Commandment. Let thine Ear now be attentive, and thine
' Eyes open, that thou mayst hear the Prayer of thy Servant, which I
' pray before thee now, Day and Night, for the Children of *Israel*,
' thy Servants, and confess the Sins of the Children of *Israel*, which we
' have sinned against thee. Both I, and my Father's House have sinned.
' We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the
' Commandments, nor the Statutes, nor the Judgments, which thou
' commandedst by thy Servant *Moses*. Remember, I beseech thee, the
' word which thou commandedst by thy Servant *Moses*, when thou
' saidst (*Deut. 4. 25, &c.*) *If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad
' among the Nations: But if ye turn again unto me, and keep my Com-*
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*Nehem. 1.
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'mandments, and do them, tho' there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of Heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and bring them unto the place where I have chosen to set my Name. Now since these are thy Servants and thy People, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great Power, and by thy strong Hand: I beseech thee, O Lord, let now thine Ear be attentive to the Prayer of thy Servant, and to the Prayer of thy Servants who desire to fear thy Name; and prosper thou, I pray thee, thy Servant this day; and grant me Favour in the sight of the King.

By thus continually Mourning, Fasting, and Afflicting himself, for the sake of his Brethren, his Country, and the Holy City, *Nehemiah* had imprinted such Tokens of Sorrow in his Face, that when his Turn came to wait, and according to his Office, he took up the Wine, to present it to the King, the King observed it: And he not having been used, in former times, to be sad in the King's presence, the King thereupon said to him, *Why is thy Countenance sad, seeing thou art not Sick? This is nothing else but sorrow of heart.*

Tho' *Nehemiah* was struck with Fear, upon the King's discovering the Trouble of his Mind, out of an awful Regard he had to him; yet, the King having given him so fair an Occasion, to open unto him the Cause of his Grief, he took heart. And having used the common Appreciation of Subjects to Princes in those times [*Let the King live for ever:*] *How can (said he) my Countenance be otherwise than sad, when the City, the Place of my Fathers Sepulchres, lieth waste, and the Gates thereof are consumed with fire.*

The King thereupon asking him what he would Request; he, lifting up his heart to God for assistance, answered; *If it please the King, and if thy Servant hath found Favour in thy sight, my Request is, That thou wouldest send me to Jerusalem, the City of my Fathers Sepulchres, that I may Build it.*

Nehem. 2. Now found *Nehemiah* the Answer of his Prayer. For God gave him so great Favour with the King, that when the King had asked him (the Queen also sitting by) how long his Journey should be? and within what time he would return? and *Nehemiah* had set a time, the King not only gave him leave to go; but upon *Nehemiah's* further Request, gave him Letters, both to the Governors of the Provinces beyond the River, charging them to convey him safely over, until he should come into Judea; and to the Keeper of the King's Forrest; commanding him to furnish him with Timber, for Beams for the Gates of the Palace, and for the Walls; and for the building of an House for *Nehemiah* himself, as Governor, to dwell in, while he should reside there.

Thus furnished, *Nehemiah* set forward; and when he was come to the Governors, and had delivered his Credentials to them; they, seeing the Equipage in which he came (for the King had sent some of the Captains of his Army, with Horse-men, to attend him thither) received him with due respect. Only *Sanballat* the Horonite (a Toparch, or Chief Officer among the Moabites) and *Tobiah* the Ammonite (called the Servant, because, as some think, he was a Vassal to the Persian Monarch; tho' otherwise a Man of prime Note among the Ammonites) being great Enemies to the Jews, were exceedingly vexed, when they heard that there was a Man come, to seek the welfare of the Children of Israel.

But *Nehemiah*, not regarding them, pursued his Journey to Jerusalem. Whither being come, and having spent three Days there; he arose one Night, and taking only some few Men with him, he went out privately, to take a view of the Breaches that were in the Walls of the City; without telling any Man, what God had put in his heart to do.

Going

Going out therefore by *the Gate of the Valley*, before the *Dragon-Well*, he rode on to the *Dung-port* (called so, because the *Filth* and *Soilage* of the City was usually carried forth through that Gate) and viewed the *Walls* of the City on that side; which he found were broken down, and the *Gates* there of *consumed with Fire*. Thence directing his Course to the *Gate of the Fountain*, and to the *King's Pool* (each taking name from the *Pool Siloah*, or *Siloam*) he found the way so *ruinous*, that there was no place for the *Beast* he rode on to pass. Wherefore turning from thence, he went up (while it was yet *Night*) by the *Brook*; and having on that side also viewed the *Wall*, he turned back again: And entering the City by the *Gate of the Valley* (through which he went forth) he returned home; none of the *Jews*, neither *Priests*, *Nobles*, *Rulers*, nor *Workmen* (save those few that went with him) knowing whither he went, or what he did. For he had not yet opened his Purpose to any of them.

But after he had, from this *Personal view*, satisfied himself what was *Nehem. 3.* needful to be done, he called his Brethren the *Jews* together, and thus bespake them. *Ye see* (said he) *the Distress we are in; how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the Walls thereof are burnt with fire: Come, and let us build up the Wall of Jerusalem; that we be no more a Reproach.* Then to *incourage* them, he told them how good the Lord had been unto him, and what *Favour* he had given him with the King; relating to them, for their *confirmation*, the *Discourse* that had passed between the King and him; shewing them also the *Commission* and *Authority* which the King had given him. Whereupon they all cried out, *Let us arise and build:* And strengthening one another, they cheerfully set their Hands to the work.

But when *Sanballat* and *Tobiah*, with *Geshem* (a *Toparch* or Governor in *Arabia*) heard that they were going to build, (which they soon did, by means of *Tobiah's Wife*, who was a *Jewess*) they laughed them to *scorn*; and in contempt of them said, *What is this thing that ye do? Will ye rebel against the King?*

Nehemiah thereupon, letting them know, that he had *sufficient warrant* for what he did; added, *The God of Heaven will prosper us; therefore we, his Servants, will arise and build. But as for you* (said he) *ye need not trouble your selves about it; for ye have no Portion, nor Right, no, nor any Memorial* (no *Register*, nor *Monument*) *in Jerusalem*, to shew that ye, or any of your *Ancestors* did ever belong to God.

By this means rid, for the present, of these *envious Neighbours*, the *Jews* went heartily on with their Building; *Eliashib* their High-Priest, with his Brethren the *Priests*, setting them a good *Pattern*, by building up the *Sheep-Gate*, the nearest to the Temple, and through which the *Sheep*, which were offered in *Sacrifices*, were usually brought. This *Gate* the *Priests* took upon them to build; and did both finish and dedicate it. Whose Example the People following, divided the Work among them; some taking one part, some another, as is particularly set forth in this third Chapter. Where we may observe, that some parts of the Work were undertaken by *private Families*, as in *ver. 4, 6, &c.* Some parts by *Bodies Politick*, or *Corporations*, as by the Men of *Jericho*, *ver. 2.* By the *Tekoites*, *ver. 5.* (where a *Brand* is set on their *Nobles*, for not putting their Necks to the Work of the Lord.) Some parts by *Companies*, or *Trades*; as the *Goldsmiths*, and the *Merchants*, *ver. 32.* And some were so zealous and forward, that when they had finished one Piece of the Work, they undertook another; as *Meremoth*, *ver. 4. & 21.* and the poor *Tekoites*, (tho' deserted by their Lords,) *ver. 5. & 27.*

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Thus, many Hands make light Work, the Building went on apace. Which when Sanballat understood, he was wroth, and in great Indignation mocked the Jews. And to animate the Soldiers against them, he said to his Brethren (or Companions) in the hearing of the Army of Samaria, *What do these feeble Jews intend to do? Will they fortifie themselves? Will they Sacrifice? Will they make an End in a Day? Will they revive the Stones out of the Heaps of the Rubbish which are burnt?* Whereupon Tobiah, to shew his Contempt also of the Jews and their Undertaking, deridingly added, *Even that which they build is such, that if but a Fox go up upon it, she shall break down their Stone Wall.*

These scornful Taunts kindled a Zeal in good Nehemiah, to spread his Complaint before the Lord; and to cry unto him for Vengeance upon those malicious Opposers of his People, and Work. But the Work notwithstanding went forward: For the People, encouraged by Nehemiah, and heartily engaged in their own Minds, carried it on with that earnest Diligence, that in a little time the parts of the Wall were joined together, and raised to half its height.

But when Sanballat and Tobiah, with their Accomplices (the Arabians, Ammonites and Ashdodites) heard that the Walls of Jerusalem were so near made up, and that the Breaches began to be stopped, they raged exceedingly; and Conspired all of them together to go and fight against Jerusalem, that they might hinder the Work. And so closely had they laid their Design, and intended to carry it so privately on, that the Jews should not see any of them, nor should know any thing of the Matter, until they were got in among them, and were fallen on a killing and slaying them.

But tho' this Conspiracy was carried on with all imaginable Secrecy; yet the Jews which dwelt by them got notice of it; and halting to Jerusalem, informed their Brethren there, of the Design that was formed against them; letting them know, that their Enemies did not intend to Proclaim War, nor to bring it to a pitched Battel, but to take them at unawares, and unprovided; and to set upon them in all places where they could find an Advantage.

This made the Jews (having first poured forth their Prayers unto Almighty God for Help) set a Watch Day and Night against their Enemies; to discover, and give notice of their Approaches. And because the Men of Judah complained, that the strength of the Bearers of Burdens was decayed; and so much Rubbish yet remained to be removed, that they should not be able both to carry away the Earth, and to defend themselves while they were working at the Wall; therefore Nehemiah set the rest of the People, according to their Families, in the lower Places behind the Wall, as well as on the higher Places, Armed with their Swords, their Spears, and their Bows; that they might be both a Defence, and Encouragement to the Workmen.

Which done, Nehemiah, having taken a view of them, went amongst them to cheer and hearten them on; bidding both the Nobles and Rulers, and the rest of the People, Not to be afraid of them: But to remember the Lord, who is great and terrible; and if (said he) they assault you, fight for your Brethren, your Sons and your Daughters, your Wives, and your Houses.

Thus stood they on their Guard for a while; 'till they understood, that Sanballat and his Party, finding their Design was discovered, and that the Jews were prepared to receive them, had let it fall. Whereupon the Jews, perceiving that God had brought to nought the Counsel of their Enemies, returned all of them to the Wall, every one to his Work again. Yet so, that from that time forward, one half of

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Nehemiah's Servants (suppose his *Guards*) wrought in the Work; and the other half held the Weapons and Armour, in readiness, if need should be; and the Rulers stood behind the People, to back them. Moreover, the *Builders* had every one his Sword by his Side, whilst he builded; and all the Labourers, as well they that laded the Burdens, as they that bare them, wrought every one with one Hand, and held a Weapon in the other.

The *Trumpeter* always attended *Nehemiah* the Governour. And because the Work was great and large, and by reason of the length of the Wall, they were separated upon it, one Company far from another, he directed the Nobles and all the People, that wheresoever they should hear the sound of the Trumpet, they should forthwith resort thither, to relieve those that should be engaged; and for their Encouragement and Comfort he told them, *Their God would fight for them.*

Thus went they on, plying the Work hard; for half of them held the Spears from Break of Day, 'till the Stars appeared at Night. And then *Nehemiah* caused all the Workmen, with their Servants, to Lodge within *Jerusalem*, that they might be a *Guard to the City* in the Night, as well as labour in it in the Day. And so intent, and watchful was *Nehemiah* in the Work, that neither he, nor his Brethren, nor his Servants, nor the Guards, did any of them put off their Cloaths; except it were to shift themselves, for washing.

While thus all Hands were busily imployed, a *Discontent* brake out among the common People; which was likely to have given a troublesome Diversion from the Work, if it had not been timely and discreetly composed; the occasion whereof was this. *Nehem. 5.*

There being a *Dearth* or Famine in the Land, Provisions were grown scarce and dear; and the *Poorer sort* of People, being continually engaged in the Publick Buildings, had not time to improve their own Estates, to the best Advantage for themselves, and their Families; so that they began to be *press'd with Straits*; and the *Rich*, who by the Law (*Deut. 15. 7, 8.*) should have helped them freely, instead thereof, did *rather oppress* them, with *Usurious Exactions*.

This Burthen, when they had long born it, grew so heavy and uneasy to them, that it made them break forth into a *general Complaint*, both the Men and their Wives, against their Brethren, the *Rich Jews*. Some of them alledged, that they had *great Families to maintain*; and therefore were fain to take up Corn (upon Trust) to keep them alive. Others said, they had *Mortgaged their Lands, Vineyards and Houses* for Money to buy Corn, because of the Dearth. And there were also that said, *They had been forced to take up Money upon their Lands and Vineyards*, to pay the King's *Tribute*; which all the *Jews* were subject to (*Ezra 4. 13.*) except the Priests, and other Ministerial Officers, belonging to the House of God, (*Ezra 7. 24.*) But tho' they thus assigned *divers Causes* of their Poverty and Straits, yet in this they *all agreed*, That tho' their Flesh was as good as the Flesh of their rich Brethren, and their Children as near, and dear to them, as the Rich Men's Children were to them, yet they were driven to such Necessities, by their Brethren's *Exactions* upon them, that they were fain to subject their Sons to *Bondage*, and their Daughters to be *Servants*. And they instanced, that some of their Daughters were brought into Bondage already; and it was not in their power to redeem them, because other Men had their Lands and Vineyards.

When *Nehemiah* had heard this great *Complaint*, he was very Angry. And consulting with himself, how he might *remedy* this *Mischief*, he rebuked the Nobles, and the Rulers, for *exacting Usury* every one of

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his poor Brother. And that he might the better prevail upon them, he (politickly) set a great Assembly of the People against them, before whom, he reasoned thus with them.

‘ We (said he) according to our Ability (and indeed, according to our Duty, *Levit. 25. 48.*) have redeemed our Brethren the *Jews*, which were sold unto the Heathen; and will you even sell your Brethren? Or shall they be sold unto us? This put those oppressing *Jews* to such a *Non-plus*, that not knowing what Answer to give, they held thier peace. Whereupon *Nehemiah*, pursuing the Point, said, ‘ It is not good that ye do. *Ought ye not to walk in the Fear of our God*, were it but to avoid the Reproach of our Enemies the Heathen? I likewise, and my Brethren, and Servants, might exact of them Money and Corn; I pray you, let us leave off *this Usury*. Restore, I pray you, this Day to them their Lands, their Vineyards, and their Olive-yards, and their Houses! and the Hundredth part also of the Money, Corn, Wine and Oil, that ye exact of them.

To this they all agreed, saying, *We will restore them; and will require nothing of them, but will do as thou hast said.* Whereupon *Nehemiah*, taking them at their Word, called the Priests, and in their Presence, did take an Oath of them, that they would do as they had then promised. And to engage them the more sensibly and strictly to it, he shook his Lap, and (by way of Imprecation) said, *So God shake out every Man from his House, and from his Service, that performeth not this Promise, even thus be he shaken out, and made empty.* To which, all the Congregation said *Amen*, and praised the Lord; and the People did according to this Promise.

Thus was a discontented and dangerous *Faction* appeased, and allayed by the discreet Care and Zeal of *Nehemiah*. Nor did he work upon the People by Precept only, and Admonition, but by a self-denying Example he led them on. For whereas the former Governours, that had been before him, were chargeable unto the People, taking Provisions of them for their Table, besides a standing Revenue of Forty Shekels of Silver (that is Fifty Shillings) by the Day; and suffered even their Servants to bear rule over the People: *Nehemiah* not only did not so, because of the Fear of God that was upon him; but he forbore buying any Land for himself, and was continually employed, both he and his Servants, in or about the Work of the Wall. And during the whole Twelve Years time of his Government, from the Twentieth, to the two and Thirtieth Year of King *Artaxerxes*, he only forbore to take the Governour’s Maintenance, but at his own Charge kept an open House; having commonly at his Table an Hundred and Fifty of the *Jews* and Rulers, besides those that came in unto him from the Heathen.

Answerable to such a Family was the Provision of his House. For every Day he had an Ox dressed, and six choice Sheep, besides Fowls; and once in ten Days, store of all sorts of Wine. All which he defrayed at his own Charge, not requiring the Allowance due to him as Governour; because he saw the Burthen was heavy upon the People.

By this encouraged, the People plied the Work so hard, that now *Nehem. 6.* the Wall was builded, and all the Breaches in it made up, only the Gates were not yet hung. But when *Sanballat*, *Tobiah* and *Geshem* understood how fast the Work went on, and how near it was to be wholly finished; they turned their Fury into crafty Policy, thinking thereby to betray *Nehemiah*. Wherefore they sent to invite him, to give them a meeting in one of the Villages, in the Plain of *Ono* (a place in the Tribe of *Benjamin*) purposing, when they had him there, to do him
a Mis-

a Mischief. But he, instead of going, returned them Answer, That he had a *great Work in hand*; which must needs stop, if he should leave it; and therefore he was not at leisure to come down to them. Nehem. 6.

So earnest they were to have gotten him within their reach, that four times one after another they sent him the *same Invitation*; and he as often returned them the *same Answer*.

At length Sanballat, perceiving that Nehemiah was too wary a Man, to be drawn into Danger by such a general Invitation; concluded he would try him once more, on pretence of an *important Business*; which he thought would touch him to the Quick, and make him come to clear himself. Wherefore he sent his Servant to him the fifth time, with a Letter in his Hand, but open: Which when Nehemiah had received, he found the Contents thereof to be thus.

‘It is reported among the Heathen, and Geshem saith it, That thou and the Jews intend to Rebel. For which Cause thou buildest the Wall, that thou mayst be their King. And that thou hast also appointed Prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem; and to say, *There is a King in Judah.* And now shall it be reported to the King (*Artaxerxes*) according to these Words. Wherefore, come now, and let us take Counsel together about it; that is, how to stop the spreading of his Report, and prevent the Danger that may arise thereby.

Nehemiah easily perceived that all this was but a *contrived Design*, to make him and the Jews afraid; that so their Hands being weakened, the Work they were about, tho’ so near finished, might yet receive a stop, and not be compleated. Wherefore, in Contempt of Sanballat, and his wicked Devices, he return’d him this short and blunt Answer: *There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own Heart.*

Then praying to God to encourage and strengthen him, he went to the House of Shemajah (the Son of Delajah the Priest) whom he found shut up, under pretence (as is supposed) of a Vow he had made for the safety of Nehemiah, which he made as if he was much concerned for. And pretending to Prophecy, that the Enemies of Nehemiah would come to slay him in the Night; he would have perswaded Nehemiah to go with him into the inner part of the Temple, and secure themselves there, by shutting the Doors of the Temple upon them.

Tho’ Nehemiah, not then suspecting Shemajah of Falshood, did not at first apprehend his Design; yet from a sense of Religion and Honour, with Respect to the Work he was engaged in, and the Station he was placed in, he answered with a sort of Indignation, *Should such a Man as I flee! What Man, under my Circumstances, would go into the Temple, to save his Life? I will not go in.*

When Nehemiah had given this resolute Answer, he perceived by the effect it had on Shemajah, that God had not sent him with that Message to him; but that, being hired by Tobiah and Sanballat, he had pronounced that Prophecy against him, on purpose to have put him in Fear, and have drawn him into something, which might have furnished them with Matter for an evil Report, wherewith they would have Reproached him.

But Nehemiah was preserved out of all their Snares. And having committed himself to God, the Righteous Judge, and Avenger of his suffering Servants, he went boldly on in his Undertaking; so that on the 25th Day of the Sixth Month (by the Jews called *Elul*) the whole Work was compleated in Fifty Two Days, so says the Text expressly. But from whence to begin the Computation, Interpreters are not agreed. Tremellius and Junius would begin these 52 Days after the Stone Wall

was

was built. The *Annotators* on the *English Bible*, in their *Marginal Note* on *Nehem. 6. 15.* take these Days to begin after *Nehemiah* had sent his Answer to *Sanballat*, which is less likely than the other. I rather incline to think, that the *whole Work*, considering the *many Hands* that were imployed, and the great *Diligence* that was used in it, was begun and ended in 52 Days; nor can there be much more time allowed for it. For it was in the *First Month* (called by the *Jews Nisan*) that *Nehemiah* was in *Babylon*, and obtained of the King leave to go to *Jerusalem*, *Nehem. 2. 1.* And tho' we have not an express Account what time he spent in his Journey, and when he arrived at *Jerusalem*, yet if we may guess at it, by the time *Ezra* spent in the same Journey, when he came from *Babylon* to *Jerusalem*, (allowing for the delay *Ezra* had at the River *Abava*, when he first set forth, *Ezra 8. 15.* and 31.) it is not probable that *Nehemiah* got to *Jerusalem* 'till about the end of the *Fourth Month*; for *Ezra*, tho' he set out from *Babylon* on the *First Day* of the *First Month*, reached not *Jerusalem* 'till the *First Day* of the *Fifth Month*. And from thence to the 25th of the sixth Month, may make out the Two and Fifty Days, and *Nehemiah's* Three Days rest before he began; or thereabouts.

But not to be *over-curious*, in a Matter not of the greatest Moment: When the *Jews Enemies*, as well the *Samaritans*, as the *Heathen* that were round about them, understood the Building was fully finished, they were much dejected in their Minds; for they perceived that this Work was brought to Perfection by the God of the *Jews*.

Yet for all this, *Nehemiah* was not free from both Trouble and Danger; for the Nobles of *Judah*, as they had all along done, did still hold a Correspondence with *Tobiah*; sending Letters frequently to him, and receiving Letters from him. For he, by linking himself and his Family in Marriages among them, had gotten a great Interest in *Jerusalem*: In so much that many of the *Jews* (which is strange to think) were Sworn unto him. He himself had Married a *Jewess*, the Daughter of *Shecaniah* the Son of *Arab* (a Head of a considerable Family, who brought back from the Captivity Seven hundred seventy and five Persons, *Ezra 2. 5.*) and his Son *Jobanan* had Married the Daughter of *Meshullam* (the Son of *Berechiah*) of another great Family in *Judah*, *Nehem. 6. 17, 18.*

By means of these *Cross-matches*, this crafty *Ammonite* had wound himself into the Interest and Affection of the *Jewish Nobles*, who would take occasion sometimes to commend him; and as his Name (*Tobiah*) signifies a good Lord, they would set forth his good Deeds before *Nehemiah*. And, which was worse, they discovered to him *Nehemiah's* Counsels, which embolden'd *Tobiah* to attempt by his Letters, to put *Nehemiah* in fear.

Nehem. 7. This made *Nehemiah* more watchful over both him and them, lest Conspiracy should be carried on between them, for the betraying of the City. Wherefore singling out his Brother *Hanani*, and *Hansniah*, the Ruler of the Palace (who was a Faithful Man, and one that feared God above many) he gave them a particular Charge over *Jerusalem*; that they should not suffer the Gates of the City to be opened, until the Sun had been up some time: And that in the Evenings they should stand by, and see the Gates firmly barred: And should appoint Watches (not of loitering Fellows, or unsettled Straglers, but) of the House-keepers in *Jerusalem*; who should take their Turns to Watch, and should have their Stations every one against his own House.

But because the City was large, and the Inhabitants but few, by reason that the Houses were not yet generally builded; *Nehemiah* (as God put

put it into his Heart) assembled the Nobles and Rulers, together with the People, that they might be reckoned by their *Genealogies*: Having found a *Register* of the *Genealogy* of them who came up at the first, wherein the Names of the Heads of Families, with the Number of Persons belonging to each Family, were particularly set down; tho' with some *diversity* in the Accounts given thereof, by *Ezra*, (*Chap. 2.*) and by *Nehemiah* here. The Reason of which Difference is by some supposed to be, that the *Register* or *Catalogue* we have in *Ezra*, was made at *Babylon*, before they set forward: The other, which *Nehemiah* found, was made at *Jerusalem*, after they were come thither; and there might alterations happen in their *Families*, in so long a Journey.

By this *Register* the People being called over, by their Families, some of them were at a great loss, not being able to shew their *Father's* House, nor their *Pedigree*, to manifest whether they were of *Israel*, or no. And even of the *Priests*, some sought their *Genealogy* by the *Register*; but could not find it: And were therefore, as polluted, put from the *Priesthood*; the Governour commanding, that *they should not eat of the most Holy Things, till there should stand up a Priest with Urim and Thummim*, who might from God determine, whether they were of the *Priestly Race*, or no.

The *Poll* being taken, whereby they knew both their *Numbers* and *Strength*; that part of the People, which did not dwell at *Jerusalem*, did agree to bring *one of Ten*, which should be taken by Lot out of their *Numbers* to dwell in the Holy City *Jerusalem*, that they might be an *additional Strength* to the Place. And this was so well accepted of by the rest of the People, that they thereupon blessed (or *returned Thanks to*) all those Men that thus willingly offered themselves to dwell at *Jerusalem*.

While now the People were assembled together, and having settled (as *Nehem. 8.* well as they could) their *Genealogies*, the Governour with their chief Fathers, and the rest of the People, had made their Free-will-offerings for the Work of the Lord; *Ezra* the Scribe, at the Request of the People, brought forth the Book of the Law, which the Lord, by *Moses*, had commanded *Israel*: And being in the Street, before the *Water-gate*, *Ezra*, the Priest and Scribe, stood up upon a *Pulpit of Wood*; So the *Text* in the *English*, but the *Margin*, from the *Hebrew*, says, *A Tower of Wood*. And probably it might be of the like Form with that, which in the *Margin* to *Chap. 9. 4.* is called *a Scaffold*. Whatever *Fashion* it was of, it was something made on purpose to stand upon, not in: And it was large enough, it seems, for *Thirteen* besides himself, to stand on: For so many, if I miscount them not, stood beside him; *Six* on his Right Hand, and *Seven* on his Left.

Being thus raised a little above the rest of the People, that he might be the better both seen and heard of them all, *Ezra* opened the Book in their Sight; at which they all stood up. And when *Ezra* had blessed the Lord, the great God, all the People, lifting up their Hands answered, *Amen, Amen*: And bowing their Heads, worshipped the Lord, with their Faces towards the Ground.

It is the Opinion of some, that the People were gathered in several *distinct Assemblies* (some think *Eight*) at one and the same time, for the Convenience of hearing the Law read and expounded; which is not altogether unlikely: For besides *Ezra*, the *Levites* are said to have read in the Book of the Law; and to have given the Sense, and caused the People to understand it.

However, the People, it seems, when they heard the Words of the Law (which they were sensible they had transgressed) did *mourn and weep*. So that *Nehemiah* and *Ezra*, with the *Levites*, were fain to *quiet and still them*; bidding them *not mourn, nor weep* at that time: But

hold their Peace, because that Day was *holy* unto the Lord their God. And therefore they should not shew any Tokens of Grief or Sorrow on that Day: But should *make good Cheer*, eating and drinking of the best; and should *send Portions* of their Provisions unto them, for whom nothing was prepared. For that Day, being the *First* of the *Seventh* Month, was Holy unto the Lord their God; and *the Joy of the Lord was their Strength*.

This being a Proposition very agreeable to the People, they readily closed with it; and went their way to eat and to drink, and to send *Portions*, and to make great Mirth: Because they had understood what had been read, and declared to them.

On the next Day were gathered together the chief of the Fathers of all the People, with the Priests and the *Levites*, unto *Ezra* the Scribe, to be more particularly instructed in the Law. And upon further Search, they found written in the Law, (*Levit. 23. 40.*) that *the Children of Israel should dwell in Booths, in the Feast of the Seventh Month*: And that they should make Proclamation in all their other Cities, as well as in *Jerusalem*, That the People should go forth and fetch *Olive-Branches*, and *Pine-Branches*, and *Mirtle-Branches*, and *Palm-Branches*, and *Branches of Thick Trees*, to make *Booths*.

When therefore this was published to the People, they went forth, and brought home *Branches*, and made themselves *Booths* therewith, some upon the *Roofs* of their Houses; others in their *Courts*; some in the *Courts* of the *House* of God; others in the *Streets*: So that all the Congregation of them that were come again out of the Captivity, made *Booths*, and sat under them. And great Gladness was among them, on this Occasion: For this was more than had been done since the Days of *Joshua* the Son of *Nun*; which was more than a Thousand Years.

Nehem. 9. But after this Solemnity was over, the Children of *Israel* assembled again, on the Four and Twentieth Day of the same Month; and now they appeared in *Sackcloth*, Fasting and Mourning with Earth upon them: And confessed their Sins, and the Iniquities of their Fathers. In which having briefly touched the Greatness and Goodness of God, they enumerated his gracious and merciful dealings with their Fathers, from the time that he made the Covenant with *Abraham*: And acknowledging their Fathers, and their own Disobedience and Rebellion; they confessed to the Justice of God's Chastisement. And in the Conclusion, they made a solemn Covenant with the Lord that they would walk in his Law given by *Moses*. Which Covenant, that it might be the more firm and lasting, they committed to writing; and the chief of their Nobles, with the Priests and *Levites*, did set their *Seals* unto it. The rest of the People, who did not seal it, both Men and Women, Old and Young, that were come to Years of Understanding, to testify their Concurrence with their Brethren therein, did bind themselves with an Oath and Execration, to the observance thereof.

A. M.
3538. But alas! they quickly broke both their *Oath* and the *Covenant*. For *Nehemiah*, having settled the Officers, both in Church and State (*Chapters 11, and 12.*) went back, according to his Engagement, to King *Artaxerxes* at *Babylon*. And altho' he was absent but a little time, probably not much above a Year: Yet in that time they fell into great Disorders.

For *Eliashib* the Priest, having the Oversight of the Chambers of the House of God, and being *allied to Tobiah* (the Jews great Enemy) had prepared for him a great Chamber in the Court of the House of God, wherein they were wont in former times, to lay the Meat-offerings, and other Holy Things, for the use of the Temple and Priests.

This *Greatness* of theirs with that *prophane Ammonite*, led them into a violation of their Covenant they had so lately made; by *prophaning the Sabbath*,

Sabbath, and marrying with the Heathen: So that when *Nebemiah* returned from *Babylon*, he found it no small work to *reform them a-new*.

It grieved him sore, that so open an Enemy, and so mischievous a Man, as *Tobiah* was, should have a Chamber prepared for him in the Court of the House of God; and he resolved to out him *at any rate*: Yet he held it needful to do it as *warily* as he could, to prevent *Sedition* or *Tumult*; knowing how far he had *insinuated* himself into the *good Opinion* of too many of the People, especially the *Great Ones*.

Causing therefore the Book of the Law to be read, in the Audience of the People; it was therein found written (*Deut. 23. 3.*) That *the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come unto the Congregation of God for ever; because they met not the Children of Israel with Bread and Water* Neh. 13. (that is, with Friendly Entertainment) *when they came out of Egypt: but hired Baalam against them, to Curse them; though God turned the Curse into a Blessing.*

When the People heard this, they *separated from Israel all the mixed Multitude*. And this opened the way, for *Nebemiah* to rid himself of *Tobiah*, who was an *Ammonite*; without Danger of the People's protecting him, or at all siding with him. Wherefore without more ado, he *cast forth* all *Tobiah's* Household-stuff out of the Chamber: And causing it to be *cleansed*, he brought again the Vessels of the House of God, with the Meat-offering and the Frankincense into it.

Then observing that in his absence, the *Portions of the Levites* had not been given them; the want of which had made them forsake their several Ministerial Services, and betake themselves every one to his Field for maintenance: He contended with the Rulers about it; and reducing the *Levites* to their Places and Business, he caused the People to *bring in the Tithes*, and appointed Treasurers to receive and distribute them.

He took notice also, that some of the Jews did *prophane the Sabbath*, by doing *Servile works* upon it; as treading their Wine-presses; bringing in Sheaves of Corn, with Wine, Grapes, Figs, and all manner of Burdens, into *Jerusalem*, upon Laden Asses, on the Sabbath-day. Others *sold Victuals*, and all manner of Wares on that Day. All which he *testified against*; and contending with the Nobles about it, said unto them, *What an evil thing is this that ye do, in prophaning the Sabbath-day! Did not your Fathers thus? and did not our God bring all this Evil upon us, and upon this City, for such things? Yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel, by prophaning the Sabbath.*

Thus for a while he *reasoned* with them. But finding that Words would not do, he commanded that, towards the Evening before the Sabbath, *the Gates of the City should be shut*: And that they should not be opened again, until after the Sabbath was ended. And because he would be sure, that this Command should be duly observed; he set some of *his own Servants* at the Gates, to see that no burden was brought in on the Sabbath-day.

By this means the *Merchants*, and Sellers of all kinds of Wares, were greatly disappointed. For coming, as they used to do, with their Goods to sell, and not being admitted to enter; they were forced *to lodge abroad* without *Jerusalem*. Which when they had done *once or twice*, and yet would not take warning; *Nebemiah testified against them*: Asking them, *why they lodged before the Wall?* And in short, told them, If they did so again, *he would lay Hands on them*. That so *scared* them, that they came no more on the Sabbath-Day: Yet lest they should have come again, he commanded the *Levites* to cleanse themselves, and come and *Guard the Gate*, that the Sabbath-day might be kept Holy.

But in no case did *Nebemiah* express a *warmer Zeal*, than against those *mixed Marriages*, which were made between Jews and other Nations. For having found some Jews that had married Wives of *Ashdod*, and of *Ammon*, and of *Moab*; whose Children, he observed, spake half in the
Speech

Neb. 13. Speech of *Ashdod*, and could not speak in the Jews Language: But used a *mongrel* Speech, *patcht* up out of both Languages: He contended with them to that degree, that he not only cursed them, but imiting some of them, he *plucked off their Hair*, and made them *swear by God*, that they should *not give their Daughters* unto the Sons of other People, nor take of the Daughters of other People for their Sons, or for themselves. For (said he to them) *did not Solomon King of Israel sin by these things?* So that altho' among many Nations there was no King like him, who was *beloved of his God*; and God made him King over all *Israel*: Yet even him did *Out-landish Woman cause to sin*. Shall we then (added he) hearken unto you; to do all this great Evil, to transgress against our God, *in marrying strange Wives?*

Nor dealt he thus with the *meanest* only, but, like a good Judge, executing Judgment *impartially*, he *served them all alike*, whom he found *guilty* in this matter: For one of the Sons of *Joadab*, the Son of *Eliashib* the High-Priest, having married a Daughter of *Sanballat* the Horonite, he *chased him from him*.

Yet notwithstanding all the *Care* and *Pains*, which this good Man took, to reform that People; how quickly and greatly they were *depraved* again, after his Death, appears by the *close Expostulations* of the Prophet *Malachi* with them: Whom, not long after, the Lord raised up, and sent to reprove them; and who is the *last of the Prophets*, of whom we have any writing, or mention in the Old Testament.

He having set forth the *peculiar Love* of God to the Seed of *Jacob*, and noted their *foul Ingratitude*; taxes them in *general*, the *Priests more particularly*, with *Irreligion* and *Prophaneness*, in *Polluting the Altar* of the Lord, *Corrupting the Covenant of Levi*, and making many to *stumble* at the Law. He reproveth them for *marrying with the Heathen*, for *mocking God* with *empty shews* only of Religion, whilst they were notoriously guilty of the highest Crimes, as *Sorcery*, *Adultery*, *Swearing falsely*, and *Oppressing the Labourer*, the *Widow*, the *Fatherless* and the *Stranger*. The People he impeached also of *Robbing God*, in with-holding the *Tythes* and *Offerings*. Which, being a part of the *Ceremonial Law*, and *appropriated* to the *Maintenance* of the *Levitick Priesthood*; while that *Priesthood* lasted, to which they were given, and that Law stood, by which they were required to be paid, could not, *without great Injustice*, be detained: Wherefore he sharply rebuked them, as well for that, as other *Enormities* they were guilty of.

And as he had before, (in *Chap. 1. ver. 11.*) given as it were a *Transient Touch* of the *Calling of the Gentiles*, and introducing the *purely Spiritual* and *Gospel-worship*: So, in Chapter 4. he foretold the *coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and of his *Fore-runner*, *John the Baptist*, under the Name of *Elijah*, with the *happy Effects* thereof; The *turning of the Heart of the Fathers to the Children*, and of the *Children to their Fathers*. Which both concludes his Prophecy; and closes the Old Testament.

Now altho' from the *Death of Nebemiah*, to the *Birth of our Saviour Christ*, amongst the various *Computations*, there are reckoned, at the least, *Four Hundred Years* and better; in which time many and *great Revolutions* fell in the Jewish State, and the Church of God underwent most *cruel Sufferings*, from both the *Grecians* and the *Romans*: Yet since the Account thereof is to be sought, partly from the *Apocryphal Books* of the *Maccabees*, partly from other Histories, of no better Authority; having thus far followed the Thread of *Sacred History*, thro' all the Books of the Old Testament, which are generally received as *Canonical*, that I may not mix *Incertainties* with *Certainties*, I here let fall my Pen.

T H E E N D.

A T A B L E O F T H E P R I N C I P A L M A T T E R S

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